Pervaiz Vandal
Sajida Vandal

The Raj, Lahore & Bhai Ram Singh



For Dr Mariam Chughtai

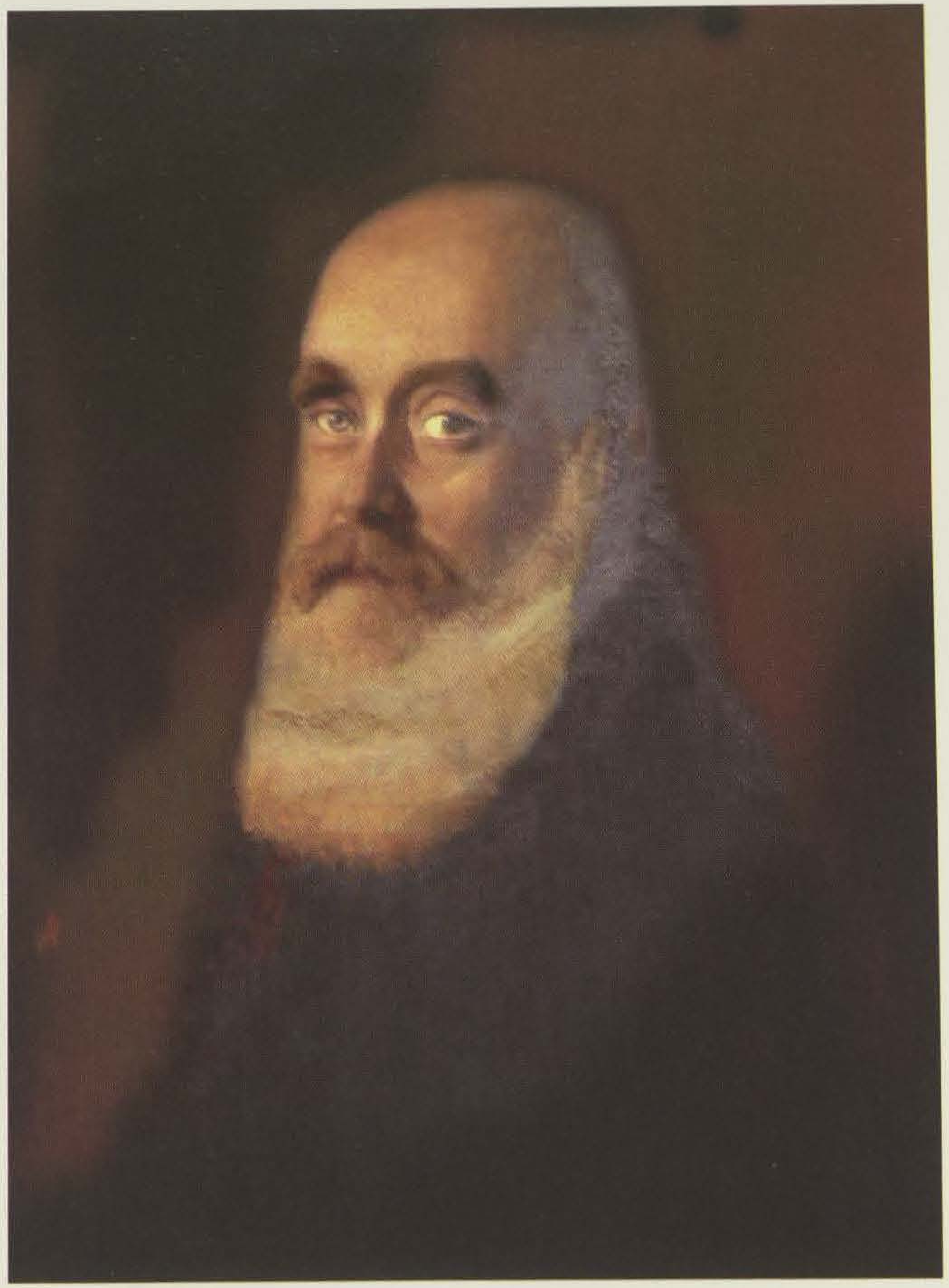
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19/MAR/2018

The Raj, Lahore, and Bhai Ram Singh



Bhai Ram Singh



John Lockwood Kipling

East and West . . . and the twain did meet.

The Raj, Lahore, and Bhai Ram Singh

Pervaiz Vandal *Sajida Vandal*

ISBN 969-8623-12-2

First Published 2006 by
Research and Publication Centre
National College of Arts, 2006
4-The Mall, Lahore 54000, Pakistan
Website: www.nca.edu.pk/rpc
E-Mail: rpc@nca.edu.pk
Phone number: 92-042-7311018
Fax number: 92-042-9210500

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Design & Production
TOPICAL Lahore Pakistan
topicalprinters@yahoo.com
Printing: **Print Master 74** Heidelberg

for

Nadia, Naveed, Omar, Ammr

Acknowledgement

The research and the writing of this book were only possible because of the generous support and encouragement of our friends and well-wishers.

In Pakistan we are indebted to Syed Babar Ali, who, like magic, arranged photographs of the Khalsa College when the political situation did not allow us to travel across to Amritsar. Mr Shamim Khan, Principal, Aitchison College, a gentleman and a scholar, allowed us the use of Aitchison College records and the freedom to visit, see and photograph the buildings in the College. Professor Zafar Ali Khan made incisive comments on the draft which helped us to focus on pertinent ideas; Dr Mubarak Ali Khan, helped with the historical view point; and Mr Nadeem Omar, of the NCA archives, kept us supplied with information on the early development of the Mayo School of Arts. We are also grateful to the staff at the Punjab Archives Department and Ms Maria Kareem, who devotedly helped with research, and to Mr Aamir Ali who composed the book.

No words can fully express our admiration and debt to our editor Ms Perin Cooper Boga, who worked through several readings of the manuscript most meticulously, and her sister Ms Rattanbai Framroz Cooper, Principal Emeritus, Rajkumar College, Gujrat, who, in her gentle, loving and not-compromising-on-quality values, kept us on an even keel.

In India we received unstinting support from Mrs Manveen Singh, Principal Springdale Society School, and her husband Dr Shivinder Singh Sandhu, an orthopaedic surgeon with a variety of interests, in locating the family of Bhai Ram Singh in Amritsar. Their unbounded hospitality made our visit most memorable and productive. We are grateful to the family of Bhai Ram Singh namely, Mrs Rani Sohal, wife of Ram Singh's grandson, Hari Sharan Singh Sohal, and her two sons Mr. Mohan Singh Sohal and Mr. Kulbir Singh Sohal and their spouses. Thanks are also due to Mrs. Sukhbir Kaur Mahal, Principal, Khalsa College for Women, Amritsar.

We thank His Royal Highness, the Earl of Wessex, for permission to visit Bagshot Park and Mr. J. Marsden, Deputy Surveyor of the Queen's Collection, St. James Palace, in facilitating the trip. Similarly we thank Mr. Michael Hunter, Curator Osborne House, and The British Council, and the Director at Lahore, Dr Iftikhar Ilahi. Also we are grateful to Ms Susan Perrett of Australia for information about Mr. John Harvey who was instrumental in bringing Ram Singh to Lahore and, 'discovering' his talents; and we thank Mr Kuldip Singh, in Canada, a great grand son of Bhai Ram Singh for contacting and sharing information.

We acknowledge, with deep gratitude, the valuable help of all.



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Preface

The genesis of this book lies in the question that both of us faced at the start of our teaching careers. Students of architecture wanted to know 'the appropriate architecture for Pakistan', and its sources. The question was sometimes well-articulated in written papers, and at others, it cropped up at the time of examinations, juries, as we architects call them. This book is an attempt to define the broad outlines of the answer.

People of a variety of ethnic, linguistic and cultural subjectivities live in Pakistan. Such diversity is a sign of richness of cultures and a cause for celebration. All efforts to impose uniformity have, understandably, not been successful. In architecture too, therefore, it is foolhardy to seek a single style and call it Pakistani. Architecture of the cold northern areas, having societies with agricultural and pastoral cultural inclinations, is necessarily different from the urban milieu of Karachi. Both are equally Pakistani and it is this unity in variety that we appreciate.

Due to the colonial history, the education system, cultural values and indeed all governance in Pakistan continues to have a colonial stamp. By and large, it is to the West that our intellectual elite looks for approval or approbation. Architects of this bent are seen emulating European architecture, depicted in magazines and other sources resulting, to give one example, in facades of buildings more suitable to cold climates and less for the strong sun of the lower latitudes. This mindless aping of the West, produces, as a knee-jerk reaction, thinkers who reject everything that the West offers; they speak of two worldviews, and like Rudyard Kipling, believe

that the two cannot meet. They would resurrect the tradition of the region and turn it into a static dogma to be followed literally. Unknowingly they, too, represent a colonial hangover. This reactive line of thinking has resulted in the transformation of the symbols of religious buildings into mere signboards used incongruently in a superficial manner. Domes and arches, for example, are touted as Islamic, forgetting that these features have been used in a large number of buildings by non-Muslim rulers throughout the world.

Discounting the two prevalent approaches, the pro- and anti-West, we feel that the issue may best be understood at a regional level rather than at the national or international level. The Punjab, and Lahore in particular, has a rich history of clashes and assimilation of cultures going back to the earliest known civilizations in the area. Having experienced the wonderful variety that human beings can generate, the Punjab has been home to a multiplicity of religions, ethnic groups, ideas and ideologies, fighting among themselves, but nevertheless, ultimately, creatively coexisting. The Punjab has generated ideas that transcend the narrow confines of caste and creed, celebrating humanity, culminating in the youngest religion of the world, Sikhism, and the all-embracing philosophy of the Sufis of the region. The Punjab, though some might have difficulty in seeing this in the last hundred years of its history, has also been able to shed restraining dogma to develop rational new channels of creativity with a humane outlook on life. Shah Hussain, Baba Farid Shakarganj, Guru Nanak, Bulleh Shah and a wonderfully large number of others, speak the common language of humility and humanity.

We are convinced that in Architecture too, the Punjab has a tradition that assimilated rather than excluded, and thereby lead to richer experiences. In the person of Bhai Ram Singh, his education, struggles, the particularity of the time he lived in, we see a thread that needs to be recognized, understood and developed. We feel that the living tradition of the land is one of creatively integrating tradition and modernity. As practicing architects that has been our governing

philosophy though, quite honestly, it is only recently that the earlier subconscious efforts have begun to take shape in a conscious and clear manner.

The book, begun in the year 2000, has taken a rather long time to complete for, just as we thought we could put a closure, new developments occurred, forcing us to continue the research. Given the earlier state of relations between Pakistan and India we had no hopes of ever seeing Ram Singh's work in India let alone meeting his family. However, we had the opportunity to travel to Amritsar in 2004 and had the good fortune to see Ram Singh's work in that city and also in Nabha, Kapurthala and Patiala. We were also able to meet his great grand children, see the beautiful drawings done by him, and listen to some family lore about the illustrious ancestor, which put a new perspective on our writing and thus the book had to be revised.

In this connection it is pertinent to mention that the first article with reference to Bhai Ram Singh was written by the authors for the UIA (*Union de International de Architects*) Region IV conference in Karachi, 2-4 December, 1985 titled 'Bhai Ram Singh, Nayyar Ali Dada and the Future'; an article on Model Town, Lahore, largely based on the Model Town Society Report of 1930, was published in *The Daily News* on 24 June, 2001; an article titled, 'An Analysis of Urban Development in Lahore during the Early British Period, 1846-1900', was published in *Journal of the Indian Institute of Architects,* April 1993; and an article 'The Establishment of the Lahore Cantonment' was read at the History Conference held in Lahore on 14 October, 2001and subsequently published in the conference proceedings. Material from all these articles has been used in the Chapter, 'Lahore: A City Transformed'.

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May 2006

Introduction

English traders began their encirclement of India in 1612 from Surat on the west coast of the Indian peninsula. They moved south and then to the east coast of the peninsula, at Madras (Chennai), in 1639 and on to Calcutta (Kolkata), in 1690. Transforming themselves from traders to soldiers, they began to move inland, capturing great swaths of land, and completing the circle with the conquest of the Punjab in 1849, the last major province to fall to the alien juggernaut. Lahore, the capital city of the Punjab, was irrevocably affected by the colonial disruption. However, the British colonial intervention in the Punjab, and indeed in all India, was not merely a question of rule by distant masters, but was, at a deeper level, the cultural transformation of people, the bending of the natives to the 'will of dominance' through military conquest and constant re-making of their identity. Edward W Said[1] has shown that the colonizer and the colonized became intimately bonded into a relationship that continues, in the postcolonial period, to unfold into new dimensions. With Independence the physical coercive might appear to have receded, but the colonized peasant or worker, and the urban intellectual or professional, continue to be informed by the colonial outlook. Architecture, as one aspect of the cultural re-formation of Indian society attempted by the colonial power, embodies interesting questions which, paraphrased in Said's terms, reduce to whether the 'will of dominance' was faced with a 'counter-will' and whether the field of architecture allows for any resistance?

The British conquest of the Punjab was not the first time that the land of the five rivers had been trampled on by alien soldiers. The Punjab is located at the crossroads linking India and Central

1. Said, Edward, see *Orientalism, Culture and Imperialism* et al

Asia on the East-West line, and the Arabian Sea in the South, and has thus seen an almost continuous flow of visitors, pilgrims and, sadly, invaders. While the variety of ideas that visitors and pilgrims brought to the region enriched the culture of the local people, the invaders brought disaster and destruction. As a rule, when invaders succeed in militarily defeating the local people, and after the first exultation of victory, decide to settle in the conquered territory, the process of governing brings forth new challenges, particularly in the domain of culture. All new ideas meet with resistance, sometimes weak and fickle, at others, strong and resilient. Invariably the resistance either succeeds in throwing back the invader or assimilates the newcomers, developing new cultural forms and relationships, which, over a process, develop an identity and longevity of their own. The successors to the British, the military, the bureaucracy and the ruling classes in the subcontinent, even after independence, continue to carry the engraved stamp of colonial rule. The patrons of art and architecture continue to be informed by values, thought processes and culture proclivities that the colonials inculcated in them.

In attempting a study of the current architecture of a people who have been subjected to colonial rule there is no choice but to survey the 'complex magnitude both of colonialism and of architecture'.[2] When European scholarship discovered the affinity between the Indian and European languages and culture and the evolutionary nature of human biological development, the Indians were declared to be that part of the family which had been left behind in the evolutionary process. It was therefore proclaimed the moral duty of the more developed to take the backward under their protection and tutelage. Power, coercion, conquest, and cultural reconstruction were seen as the 'white man's burden', to civilize lesser mortals. An integral part of the civilizing process, the reconstruction of India, was the system of education. Macaulay in his famous minute

2. Crinson, Mark, *Empire Building*, Routledge,1996

on education[3] attempted nothing less than a reincarnation of the Indians, albeit a small elite, as English in nature, defending the Raj and its economic interests. 'This reordering of Indian culture facilitated the direction given even to the self-perception of Indians.'[4] South Asia in general, and Pakistan, in particular, still carry into the post-colonial era, a grand baggage of the Raj that permeates the whole spectrum of life, including history, for colonial culture left deep footprints as it strode over the natives, reshaping and transforming their lives.

Domination and consequent resistance generate passion and heat in all aspects of life, finding expression in the political field as well as in social structures. In the field of the arts too, processes of deconstruction, transformation, reconstruction and domination find resistance, as people struggle to conserve and proclaim their heritage and identity and to retain what they hold valuable. In this red-hot crucible, new forms and expressions take shape, which fuse cultural mores and ideologies, elements of the ruling and the ruled, pushing both to adjust to new realities. None escapes unscathed. Empires come and go and leave behind, in brick, stone and mortar, their marks for later generations to study, analyze and understand their impact and to continue their lives with the opportunities and the constraints imposed by them. Even deeper and with more severe consequences, are the imprints on language, customs, behavior, governance, and song and dance, in short on the whole cultural spectrum.

The ancient Indus Valley urban culture gave way to successive incursions of the pastoral Aryans, who then reinvented themselves into a Vedanta culture unique to India. The Greek invasion led to the development of Gandhara art and civilization. The Afghan invasions from Ghazni and Ghor led to the wonderful tomb architecture, extant in the South of the Punjab, with Musa Ahangar's

3. Macaulay, T B, *Minute of 2 February 1835 on Indian Education* in *Macaulay, Prose and Poetry*, selected by G M Young, Harvard University Press 1957 p. 721.

4. Thapar, Romila, *The Penguin History of Early India*, Penguin Books 2003, p. 4

tomb being an example that survives in Lahore. The Persian influence, that came in the wake of the re-conquest of India by Humayun brought forth the glories of Mughal architecture. And of course the British period brought the wonders of technology and an official grand architecture, labeled as indo-saracenic, decreed by the vision of the new rulers of themselves as the successors to the great Mughals. Every new invader first uses the existing infrastructure of buildings, modifying it to suit his requirements and predilections. Thus temples are turned into mosques (Hagia Sophia, Istanbul), tombs into houses (Governor's House Lahore), houses into offices (Chief Secretary's Office, Lahore), according to the whims and needs of the new ruler. As the new ruler acquires confidence and consolidates his rule, new structures, purpose-built for the new conditions, begin to take shape. These range from replications of the new rulers' own past experience or, more often, new forms emerge, synthesizing the existing with the new, tentatively at first and later with greater confidence and maturity. Cross-cultural hybridization and fusion, always lead to new art forms, which do not disappear with the cessation of the empire and continue to impact its successors.

The process of the transformation of an existing built environment can best be understood as the interaction of the social and the built environment where 'social' encompasses the full milieu of socio-economic and political processes. As Harvey[5] says, 'Urbanism may be regarded as a particular patterning of the social process as it unfolds in space, and cities are the tangible expression of that process in the form of a physical built environment which exists in geographic space'. The colonial period clearly brought forth a new configuration of the political, social and economic forces that resulted in changes in the built environment. The built environment, however, is not a lifeless product of the social environment in a unidirectional process. It is, in a manner, the stage on which the

5. Harvey, David, *Society, The City and The Space Economy Of Urbanism,* Commission on College Geography, Resource Paper No 18, Association of American Geographers, Washington DC, 1972, p. 3

social environment unfolds its drama, and it has its own dynamics, which reflect on the social environment. From actual physical constraints that it might impose, to the heritage of the values and the symbolic importance that it might embody, the built environment contributes to the development of the social environment. Due to its greater permanence there is, always, a historically existing built environment that people, new rulers or conquerors inherit. Such an environment may be adopted, adapted, changed or destroyed. Whatever course is taken, the existence of a built environment serving a previous alignment of dominant and secondary cultures, cannot be ignored by the newly emerging configuration; it has to be taken into account and thus any new built environment is affected by what passed before it. The new ruling colonial culture did not merely replicate its own architecture but interacted, sometimes crudely, at other times creatively, with the existing built environment. Colonial Lahore, therefore, is a dialectical mix of the pre-British architecture and the new forms and patterns that the colonials introduced. The grid-iron street pattern as opposed to the labyrinthine, the house plan of the bungalow as opposed to the *haveli*, the informal Lawrence Gardens as opposed to the formal Shalimar, and other grand colonial buildings and monuments suitably located in the city, bespeak the colonial impact in the 'reconstruction' of the city in a new 'progressive' image.

Lahore, architecturally the richest city of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, is essentially still a colonial city, managed by an elite of officials, both civil and military, informed by the colonial ethos of the Imperial bureaucracy. Save for the walled city, and a few glorious monuments of the Mughal period, ninety percent of the city is colonial in origin and continues to develop and grow at ever increasing pace, in the moulds set during the century of British rule. City planning, and its absence in some places, house forms, style(s) of architecture, joyfully expanding housing colonies with

more vacant plots than houses, a plethora of bill boards, beautification programs leading to water-fountains without water, reflect the third-world city that is Lahore. The question is what to make of it?

Among the ancient cities of the world, Lahore, the capital city of the Punjab Province in Pakistan, is relatively young. Discounting the mythical founding by Loh or Lah, its visible history begins at about the turn of the first millennium, and it is today, at the beginning of the third, about a thousand years of age, and may be said to have led a full and colorful life. There is no authentic date of its founding; however, its known history starts c1000AD when Malik Ayaz, a nominal slave of Mahmood Ghazni, laid out the lines on which the ancient town grew. A series of invader kings the Ghoris, Tughlaks, Lodhis and Mughals brought growth, albeit sometimes punctuated with destruction. The great Mughal Emperor Akbar, made Lahore his base for fourteen years (1584-1598) and the city with its Fort, infrastructure of roads, markets and an encircling wall, acquired a glamour that went beyond the borders of India.[6]

Later Mughal emperors and their nobles added gardens, mosques, tombs and *guzars* (neighborhoods) to the city. The city prospered. The form of the city was typically Medieval with a labyrinthine street pattern dominated by the lofty citadel and the shining domes of its mosques. Multi-storied houses with central light-wells and courtyards were closely packed. Tall and graceful minarets and domes of mosques, along with Hindu temples and Sikh gurdwaras gave a varied skyline. The most common building material was burnt clay brick, giving the city a pink to red look, broken by the greenery of trees that the people of Lahore loved to plant along the roads and in their courtyards. Open drains, sometimes overflowing,

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6. Milton, J. (1608-1674) To shew him all Earth's Kingdomes and thir Glory…
City of old or modern Fame, the Seat
Of mightiest Empire, from the destind Walls
Of CAMBALU, …
To AGRA and LAHOR of great MOGUL
Paradise Lost Bk X

but always easy to clean, carried away the refuse; the paved-streets had a fresh look after every monsoon. Bazaars were crowded and busy and the variety of people with their even greater variety of dress, lent color and charm.

Prosperity in the absence of political stability brought its own peril. Like vultures circling a dying animal, invaders from the Northwest stopped in Lahore to plunder, loot and replenish their supplies, before marching on to Delhi and Agra, battering a weakening Mughal Empire. As the Empire decayed, the frequency of such incursions increased, subjecting the city to repeated pillage. A half-century of strife followed, wherein the Sikhs successfully challenged the Mughal control of the city to set up their own, short-lived and yet exhilarating, Kingdom of Lahore. The city, however, had been severely damaged. Within ten years of the passing away of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, the British, after a particularly fierce struggle with the Khalsa, the Sikh Army, conquered and annexed the Punjab in 1849.

Previous invaders and rulers since Mahmud of Ghazni, that is for over eight centuries, had some common religious and cultural links with the people of Lahore. Thus from the Ghaznavids down to the Mughals and the Sikhs, there had been an uneven, yet related, cultural evolution, and the built environment, therefore, had a continuity in its evolution and its style of architecture had coherence. The labyrinthine street pattern, the bazaar and *mohalla* (neighborhood) did not undergo any radical change. The coming of the British, however, was a break with the past, as they introduced a new gridiron-based street pattern, and bungalows as a new house form. The emulation of the ruling culture by the local gentry inevitably manifested itself in the built environment of Lahore.

The British learned the art of controlling the great variety of India from the Mughals, in particular Akbar, and adapted some of

the rituals of display and pageantry of their Court to proclaim a historical continuity of power, with the British Raj as the natural, and therefore unchallengeable, successor. They proclaimed their rule to be, like the Mughal, Providence-sent from outside India for the benefit of Indians; they used similar symbolism and in architecture, a style that invoked Mughal traditions, naming it 'indo-saracenic' to emphasize its non-Indian content, and adopted it as suitable for the buildings of the Raj.[7] They recognized the influence it had on the psyche of the Indian and used it to affirm their power, superiority and continuity with the Mughal rulers, and therefore their right to rule.[8] However in the making of this Raj style of architecture, local Indian architects, the bearers of the grand Mughal tradition, were not involved or recognized but simply ignored.

Hesitant to pass on the technical knowledge that underpinned the expansion of European powers, the British were even less willing to accept the Indians as equals in the field of art and creativity, for the Raj well understood that art, if allowed freedom, spins out of control. On the one hand the old masters of architecture were not recognized and therefore left without patronage, on the other hand no effort was made to start schools of architecture, even in the European tradition. While the training of engineering assistants was initiated, architecture as a full-fledged discipline was not introduced until the 20th century and that too was Eurocentric.[9] Colonial control on all aspects of creative thinking, particularly publicly visible architecture, was thorough and deep and Indian Art was termed savage, brutal, sex-driven, cruel and monstrous.[10] Monuments of the colonial period in varying styles, eulogizing the Raj, are the works of British architects who came out to India on contract or as engineers turned architects who interpreted design as in standard handbooks or the works of architects in Britain. 'To

7. Metcalfe, T., *Ideologies of the Raj, Cambridge University Press, 1995, p 90*

8. Vandal, P., *Urban Space as an Expression of Power: An analysis of Urban Development in Lahore during the Early British Period 1846-1900, Journal of Indian Institute of Architects*, April 1993

9. John Begg first introduced courses in Architecture at the JJ School of Arts Bombay, in 1901. George Wittet started a 4-year course in Architecture in 1908, and the J J School of Architecture was created with the bifurcation of the J J School of Arts after Independence, in 1947.

10. Mitter, Partha, *Much Maligned Monsters, Oxford, 1977*

study colonial architecture is therefore to study the allocation of power, and the relationships of knowledge and power, that make up the colonial order,' for, to the colonials, 'most central was a concern with political effect'.[11]

The British Raj brought forth new cultural and behavior patterns among the people of the Punjab. A large segment resented the rule of the *angrez* and turned inward, abdicating the difficult clash of wills. They refused to interact with the new rulers, terming them evil and satanic; they eulogized and romanticized their past, refused to learn the English language and would not send their children to the government schools. For them the present was like a bad, passing dream and all their efforts were directed towards bringing back the past. The British kept a wary eye over them but did not entirely dislike them; in fact they encouraged them to continue to be engrossed in debates about the past, as it supported the British view that the Indians were primarily concerned with the religious, lived in the past, and needed tutelage to understand the complexities of the present.

Another segment attempted to abandon their traditions altogether and took on the airs and customs of the *angrez* rulers. These represented the native classes that enjoyed benefits in terms of education and government employment. In urban areas they became the elite seeking to emulate the ruling culture and their efforts were inevitably manifested in the built environment of Lahore. The British cantonment, built in 1852, set new patterns of living, a new design of houses, the bungalow, which culminated, in 1925, in Khem Chand's Model Town,[12] a utopian dream of the local gentry to live in the European style, tempered with the local conditions of *purdah*.

Some among the British-educated classes adopted yet another

11. Metcalf, Thomas. *An Imperial Vision, Indian Architecture and British Raj, Oxford University Press, 1989,* p. xv & p 2

12. Vandal, P: 'The Model Town of Diwan Khem Chand' in *Architecture and Interiors*, June 2003

path. This group held onto their valued traditions but were willing to learn from the *angrez*. This road was the most difficult to take. Only persons thoroughly imbued with the lasting values of their culture, yet full of eagerness to learn the new technologies and all that the rulers were willing to teach, could then compete with the rulers with honor and dignity. Theirs was neither the path of abject submission, nor of abdication from the challenges of the time; they stood firm and solid on the twin pillars of what was valuable in their tradition and the new knowledge that they acquired from the Europeans. Bhai Ram Singh was such a person in the field of architecture.

The British have left an indelible mark on the city of Lahore that cannot be denied or undone. To their credit, the colonial rulers, in the late 18^{th} century, did engage in a debate[13] on a suitable architecture for the Raj, resulting in two parallel streams; one advocated the use of European styles, and the other, an adaptation of the local motifs for decoration. However no native was seen fit enough to consult or invited to join the discussion. The debate acquired sharpness when the Company rule was replaced with an Imperial dispensation with Victoria as the Empress of India, and it was embodied in the colonial buildings in Lahore. These features are reflected in Lawrence and Montgomery Halls, the Punjab Club (presently the Administrative Staff College) on the one hand, and the General Post Office, High Court, etc on the other. This book attempts to trace the architectural debates in India during the Raj, locates them in the Punjab and Lahore and elaborates on the works of Bhai Ram Singh as an example of the fusion of the west and east and a development of the living tradition of the architecture of the region.

The first chapter traces the coming of the British to India, their initial impact on the native built environment, and the debate that

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13. Among others see Metcalf, T R, An Imperial Vision, Indian Architecture and Britain's Raj, Oxford 1989 chapter 2

was generated on building styles in their search for an appropriate style for the Empire. The second chapter leads on to their coming to Lahore and their contributions to the architecture of the city. The third chapter looks at the technical and art education that the British thought fit to impart to the natives of the Punjab and the fourth is an account of Ram Singh's training and education and his subsequent achievements. In Kipling's[14] person the colonial cultural thrust acquired a sensitive and humane shape. He was a teacher who was also willing to learn. Kipling, although trained in British art schools, responded to the wonders of Indian art and architecture with a spirit of enquiry and modesty. He was not the colonial, like Curzon, who already knew.[15] Kipling came to Lahore to found the Mayo School of Industrial Art to 'inculcate in the Indian craftsmen the principles of design', as understood by the British. Luckily, Kipling found a young student, Ram Singh, who was not merely a blank slate, but was already a highly trained craftsman, who had imbibed his traditions of design and aesthetics through apprenticeship with local masters and his family. Kipling and Ram Singh in their roles of tutor and student exemplify the 'tutelage' that the British always insisted that India needed. It is true that Ram Singh learnt the English language, basic drawing, geometry and mathematics; nevertheless, he also brought to the tutor's notice and learning, the finer points of Indian design as practiced through the centuries. In a dialectical relationship lasting over a decade, the tutor and the student, integrated the colonial with the native in furniture, tapestry, sculpture, interior design and architecture.

Bhai Ram Singh soon surpassed his tutors and left behind an architecture that truly embodies the beauties of cultural assimilation. He blended the colonial experience with his own and his family's knowledge of the traditions of design, to create buildings of

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14. John Lockwood Kipling, 1837-1911, Founder Principal of the Mayo School of Industrial Art, 1875-94.

15. See Thomas R Metcalf's interesting and illuminating account of the lantern for the Taj Mahal, chosen by Curzon in the bazaars of Cairo, without any reference to any local authority for 'he knew what was appropriate', in *Past And Present: Towards An Aesthetics Of Colonialism*, in *Paradigms of Indian Architecture*. Ed G H R Tillotson, CSAS, SOAS, University of London, Curzon Press, 1998

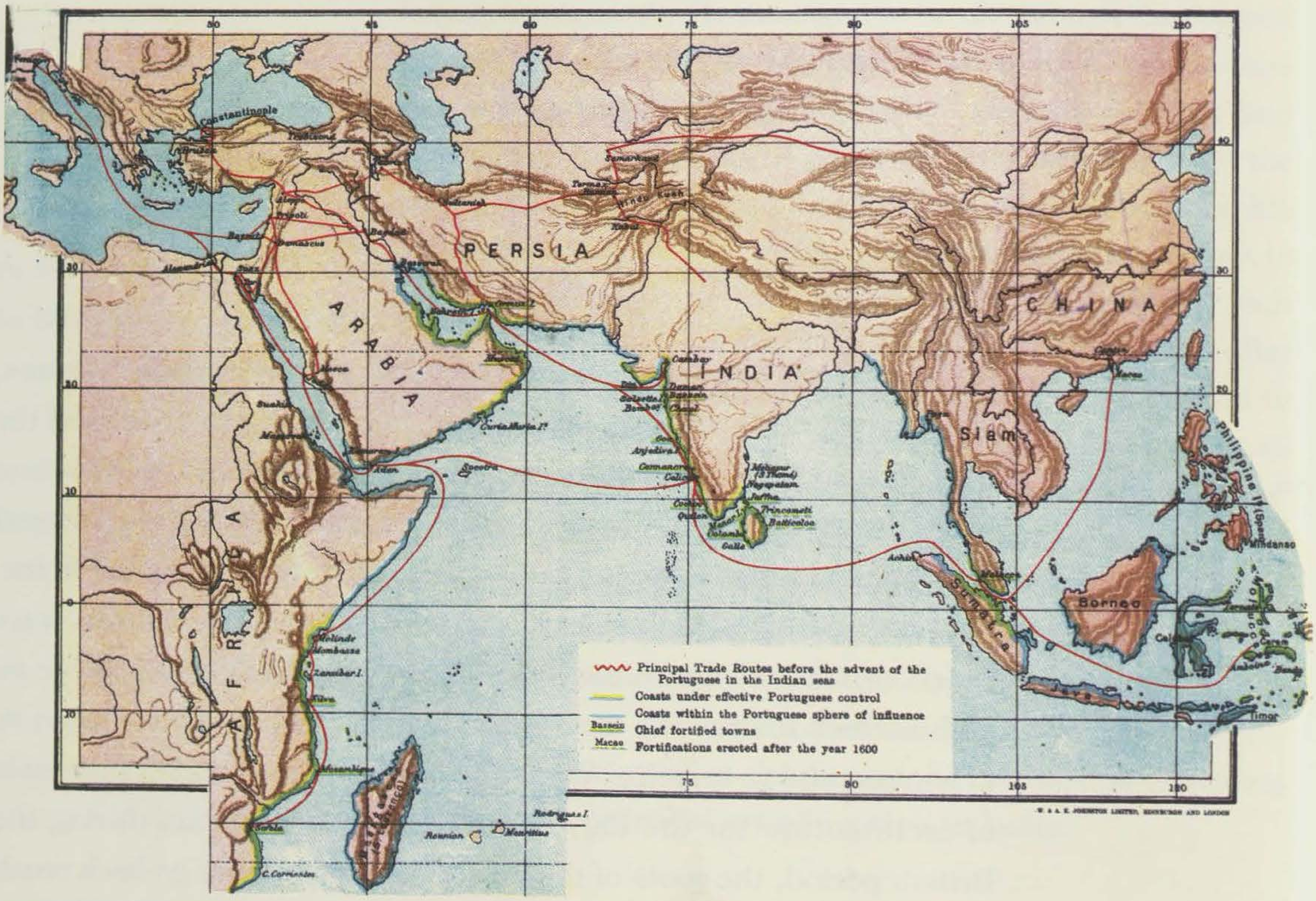
exceptional merit. He managed to break through the colonial control on art and architecture, albeit with tremendous help from Kipling, with his talent and persistence and struggle. Kipling paid a price for this promotion of the native; he was ignored in the honours list despite his decades of service in India. There were no successors to Bhai Ram Singh, no Indian architect to carry on the path that he blazed. Were there no buildings constructed after him? Why was no department of architecture started in the Mayo School of Arts under his teaching? Why was all that knowledge and experience allowed to perish with him? Did the Mayo School of Arts close down or did the land of the five rivers go dry of talent and creativity or did the traditional craftsmen die out? That there was no successor to Bhai Ram Singh, no follow-up to that tradition of excellence, no continuation of the struggle to preserve the indigenous identity in the face of the colonial, is testimony to British control of art education in India.

An Architecture for the Raj

Cultural exchanges between India and the Mediterranean are at least as old as written history. There is archaeological evidence of trade between the Indus Valley, the Gulf, Mesopotamian cultures, and beyond.[1] Alexander's invasion of India in 326 BCE opened the door to a lasting Greek influence on Gandhara art and architecture in northwestern India. Similarly there is evidence of thriving cultural and trade relations between the southern regions of India and Rome. However cultural exchanges, before European Imperialism, were bereft of the will to dominate or to exploit. In the search for an architecture for the Raj there was the desire to stamp, to imprint, to contain and to inscribe. While the question of an appropriate style of architecture for the Raj, naturally came into focus during the British period, the roots of the debate on architecture go back much before the Raj took shape, to the imperialist incursions of European powers in India, as displayed in the early colonial buildings in Goa, Bombay, Madras and Calcutta; it acquired an acuteness when the British, having acquired large provinces of India, needed to proclaim and display their suzerainty. Like the colonial conquest, the architectural influences from Europe began tentatively, turned robust and then all-powerful, transforming the historiography and the building patterns of an entire subcontinent.

Vasco da Gama, the Portuguese answer to Spain's Christopher Columbus, landed at Calicut on India's southwestern coast in 1498. Both had sailed to discover a sea route to India, to bypass the Arab and Turk strongholds that straddled the land route in the Middle

1. See, among others, Young, Gary K, *Rome's Eastern Trade*, Routledge, 2001



1

16th century South Asia sea trade routes carrying spices to Europe through the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea controlled by the Arabs, and later, the Turks. Vasco da Gama out-flanked them by going round Africa to come to India. Columbus traveled westward in search of the same spice trade and found America.

East and exacted a heavy toll on the spice trade from the Indies. The discovery of Christopher Columbus brought huge amounts of gold to Spain and terror and annihilation to the people of Central America,[2] while Vasco da Gama won the spice trade for Portugal and brought Western Imperialism to India. The Portuguese set up a number of trading posts around the Indian peninsula with their main center at Goa, which they captured in 1510. The Dutch stole a march on the Portuguese when they captured the source of spices, the Java and Moluccas Islands in the East Indies. The astronomical profits of the Dutch, said to be in the range of 2500 per cent, had all of Europe agog and attracted competition especially from the piracy-prone Elizabethan English sea captains.

2. Zinn, Howard *A Peoples' History of the United States,* Perennial Classics, 2001

The English followed the Portuguese and the Dutch to the East, not in search of any empire but only looking for profits. The East India Company obtained a charter from Queen Elizabeth I and sent forth ships to India and the East Indies. The Dutch fought off the newcomers and prevented the establishment of any lasting English toehold on Java or the Moluccas Islands. After the massacre at Amboyna, in 1623, the English gave up the spice-islands and instead concentrated on the Indian Peninsula where their main European competitors at the time were the Portuguese, who were centered in the spice-producing Cochin area. Earlier the English embassies of Hawkins (1607-11) and Roe (1615-18), after great effort and despite the Portuguese opposition, had been able to obtain permission from the Mughal Emperor to set up trading posts in Surat, which they now secured and made profitable. Success brought both larger warehouses and stronger defense works. The warehouses, grouped around a courtyard with a surrounding wall to ward off attacks, thus became the early fort, then called a factory. The main items of trade being saltpeter, textiles (calico) and spices; the British set up factories to store goods awaiting shipment. The first such factory was established at Surat in 1612 and through tenacity and some diplomacy they began to spread to other cities along the coast and inland. By 1623 the British had five additional satellite establishments subordinate to the main factory at Surat. The Portuguese wife of Charles II brought the island of Bombay (now Mumbai) as her dowry in 1660; however, Charles made it over to the East India Company in 1668. From then onward, the trade and establishment came to focus at Bombay instead of Surat, due to the greater security it offered.

In 1639, on the other side of the Deccan peninsula, the British secured a strip of land from the Rajas of Vijayanagar and set up a trading post that was later to become the city of Madras (now



2

Towards the end of the 18th century the English had taken effective control of the east and the south India limiting other European powers to tiny enclaves.

Chennai). In Bengal after a number of starts the British were able to squeeze in beside the Portuguese to set up a colony on the Hoogly River, and in 1690, Job Charnock laid the foundations of a city, Calcutta (now Kolkata), which has now become one of the largest on earth. The end of the seventeenth century saw the three Presidencies of the British firmly established in what can only be

called an encircling pattern of trade, on the periphery of the Mughal Empire. The sea defined the extremity of Mughal influence, the relatively unstable edge of the Empire where the imperial writ was weak, and that is precisely where the maritime nations of Europe, with their strong navies, established their early hold.

The British soon found that for successful trade it was important to have the favor of a local prince and it became even more profitable if the prince were a protégé of the trading company, enthroned and supported by the superior European arms. In addition to trade the British began to take sides in the local political struggles of the Rajas and Nawabs who were nominally under the Mughal Emperor, yet any adventurer could challenge an existing ruler to capture a state. Thus, to help one side win and then shift loyalty to the erstwhile opponent, to remove a particular ruler and to repeat the process, became a profitable business. Any new ruler set up by the European traders was then charged for such services and had to pay costs and give out gifts to his 'European friends', and the entire process was repeated when his opponent was helped to the throne. The French, who had also entered India in 1719, had been a step ahead of the British in this game of musical chairs; however, their reverses in the European theatre of warfare made them second fiddle to the British in India. In time, and through wars far removed from India, the British constrained and limited the operational room for the French, forcing them to finally withdraw altogether. Thus through courage, deceit and sheer bravado the British won themselves an empire.

A fundamental change occurred in the relationship between the local rulers and the newcomers. At the time of the first Jesuit Mission, 1580-83, at the court of Mughal Emperor Akbar, the

Portuguese were awed by the Mughal King and his court, the grandeur of the setting and the scholarly debates that left an impression of wealth and culture. It was a period when the Europeans were the supplicants at the Mughal court. Later events changed this relationship. The relatively facile victories of the French and the British during the late 17^{th} century against Indian rulers in the South, lowered the esteem of Indian rulers and even that of the Mughal Emperor in the eyes of the Europeans, to almost that of contempt.

Military campaigns to install puppet rulers brought profit for the commanders and the soldiers, if not always for the Company. After such a victory, trading advantages to the benefit of the British traders, and often ruinous to the local population and commerce, were instituted. In Bengal, Bombay and Madras, the rule of the '*Company Bahadur*' was exploitive to a high degree, more autocratic and rapacious than any local Raja or Nawab. Immense fortunes were made, and the East India Company grew to be a major force in the English economy, setting up its own special wharves and warehouses in London, while in India it became a de facto ruler, a corporate identity replacing the personalized rule of the Raja or Nawab. To Indians who were not yet familiar with corporate structures, it acquired a human face as the *Company Bahadur*.

The British Indian Army was officered by the British, the majority of soldiers being Indians, and in war, on the death of an officer, the line of command was clear and the next person stepped into the shoes of the fallen officer. Among the troops of the native rulers the question of succession was always unclear, if not often contested. Writing about the English, Army Subedar Sita Ram wrote, 'A wonderful thing is, they do not get in confusion when their leader is killed –

3

Interest in India led to European artists painting scenes of Indian society leading to a genre of painting called the 'Company Paintings' by Mildred & W. G. Archer.

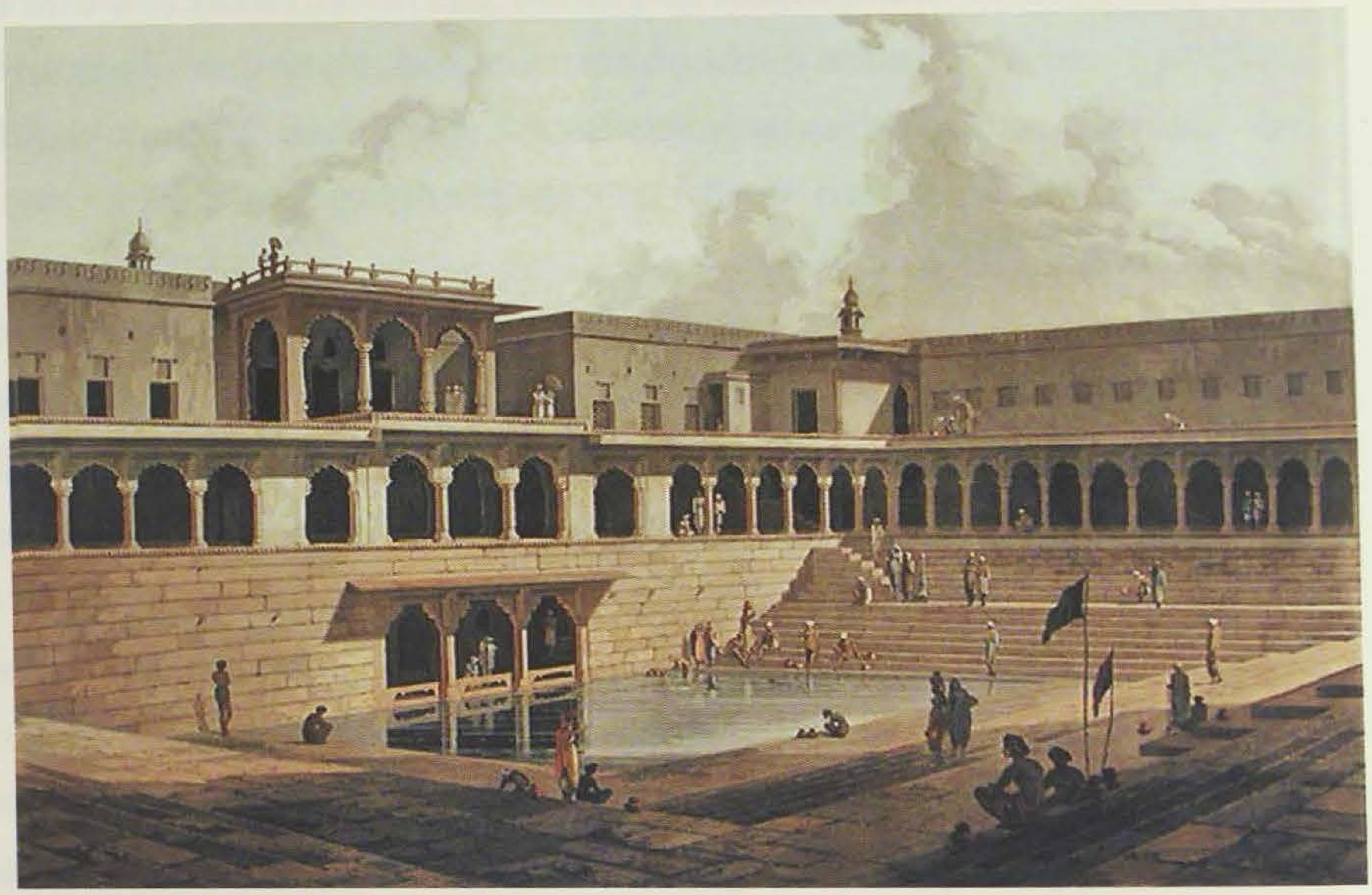
Painting by Capt. Atkins



4

Indian space in European perspective drawing. A sketch by Thomas and William Daniells, *The Baolee at Ramnagur.*

Donald Heald Rare Books, Prints and Maps



they gave up their traditional methods of representation and developed the European views and techniques of representing space. Perspective, showing space and depth, as drawn by the western tradition, slowly crept into the local artist's vocabulary. Kipling mentions[4] that the local craftsman, he does not call him an artist, is so modest about

4. Kipling, J L, *Indian Architecture of Today, The Journal of Indian Art and Industry*, Folio No3, Voume 1

his work and deprecatory about his excellent pieces, that he extols the work of European origin or even a scale drawing of a machine by the west-trained draftsman as something very special.

The British conquest thus moved from the political and economic spheres to the superstructure of culture and art, and for that, they proceeded to study and know India and then to label it in generalizations which were simple and understandable for them, yet, sometimes removed from reality.

European Re-interpretation of India

Warren Hastings, Governor General of India, 1774-85, had the foresight to see that the capture of the Indian provinces of Bengal and Bihar was a first step in a growing phenomenon. In the face of the collapsing Mughal Empire, he saw that mayhem was about to set in among the various semi-independent rulers of the peripheral provinces of the Empire and that the British would be called upon to intervene on behalf of one party or another. Also, the areas already under direct rule had to be so administered to instill a respect for the rule of the *Company Bahadur* as being just and prompt. Company officials were called to adjudicate on matters of law, custom and social conflicts and Hastings realized that the Company officers had to have knowledge of the language and the local laws, on the basis of which the whole administration could then function. He set his officials to study India, in all its variety of peoples and cultures, and gave administrative incentives in terms of promotions etc. to those who developed a facility in the local languages. This led to a 'rediscovery and reconstruction' of India by the West, of its languages, religion, customs and ancient laws.

Sir William Jones (1746-1794),[5] Chief Justice of the Bengal Supreme Court, began a study of Sanskrit and the common law in India with the help of pundits. He soon became adept at the language and found it to have a "wonderful structure more perfect than the Greek, more copious than the Latin and more exquisitely refined than either: yet bearing to both so strong an affinity, both in the roots of verbs, and in the forms of grammar, than could possibly have been produced by accident; so strong indeed, that no philologist could examine them all without believing them to have sprung from some common source, which perhaps no longer exists."[6] He founded the Asiatic Society of Bengal, which became the forum where many a learned paper was presented. Jones gathered around him Company officials who through commitment and rewards of service benefits became dedicated, erudite scholars. His successor in the study of India and the Asiatic Society was Colebrooke,[7] whom Max Mueller, the celebrated German Indologist, considered more important than Jones himself.

The work of such scholars bears analysis to understand the context of British influence in the cultural interpretation of India and therefore its architecture. Kate Teltscher writes '...most contemporaries, and many later historians and critics, have only seen in Jones the model of the disinterested colonial scholar; a figure who owes much to the desire to improve the image of the British administration in India.'[8] Teltscher is responding to Edward Said's view about Jones. Said places Jones in the colonial context wherein all scholarship and study of the Orient was directed to strengthen the colonial hold and to 'better' rule the natives. To him 'Orientalism, (The study of the Orient), carried forward two traits:

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5. Scholar of University College, Oxford, 1764, appointed judge of the Supreme Court at Calcutta, 1783, Knighted, founded the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1784, and was its President till death; translated Shakuntala of Kalidasa, and others; Laws of Manu and wrote works on Mohammadan Law.

6. Cited in the *Cambridge History of India*, i, 64

7. Henry Thomas Colebrooke (1765-1837) went to India in 1782-3, Published a translation of a *Digest of Hindu Law*, in 1791; Professor of Hindu Law and Sanskrit at College of Fort William, Calcutta.

8. Teltscher, Kate *India Inscribed*, OUP, Delhi 1995, p 193

(1) a newly found scientific self-consciousness based on the linguistic importance of the Orient to Europe, and (2) a proclivity to divide, subdivide, and re-divide its subject matter without ever changing its mind about the Orient as always being the same, unchanging, uniform, and radically peculiar object.'[9] Said bends over backwards to fully acknowledge Jones's erudition: '... before he (Jones) left England for India in 1783, Jones was already a master of Arabic, Hebrew and Persian. These seemed perhaps the least of his accomplishments: he was also a poet, a jurist, a polyhistor, a classicist, and an indefatigable scholar... and immediately on arrival there (India)...began the course of personal study that was to gather in, to rope off, to domesticate the Orient and thereby turn it into a province of European learning'.[10] Said further sums up Jones's work as: 'To rule and to learn, then to compare Orient with Occident: these were Jones's goals, which, with an irresistible impulse always to codify, to subdue the infinite variety of the Orient to "a complete digest" of laws, figures, customs, and works, he is believed to have achieved.'[11] These scholars gave the intellectual underpinning to the colonial rule where the Company official was always the diagnostician, lawgiver, executive and judge occupying the high pedestal. 'They were either judges or they were doctors'.[12] Said is presciently so right. There was a doctor on the scene, studying and codifying.

Dr. John B Gilchrist (1759-1841), a doctor by profession, initiated the study of the vernacular as opposed to the classics. In the practice of his profession he came in contact with soldiers and Indians, working for the Company, who spoke a babel of languages reflecting the great variety of India. Over five hundred years, a new language had slowly taken shape. This was a mixture of the native tongues and the court language of Persian. Thus the

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9. Said, Edward W., *Orientalism*, Penguin reprint 1995, p 98

10. ibid, p77

11. ibid, p 78

12. ibid, p 79

common vernacular had a Sanskrit, Bengali, Persian and Arabic mixture, with each language contributing more, depending on whether the speaker was a Hindu or a Muslim from the North or the South. Gilchrist called this common language with its regional and ethnic overtones, Hindoostanee. Those among the common people who could write, used the Arabic or Persian script and called it Urdu, and those who used the Sanskrit script called it Hindi. Over time these two further congealed, and with some prodding from the British, acquired distinct religious overtones, with the Muslims using Urdu and the Hindus using Hindi. Purists from both communities then further deepened the chasm, seeking roots in their respective classical languages; for Hindus the Sanskrit and for Muslims, the Persian or Arabic. Gilchrist put together its grammar and thus gave shape to the modern day Hindi and Urdu. As the *Dictionary of Indian Biography* says, Gilchrist 'was the first to reduce to a system the language, then unsettled, called Hindustani: published a dictionary and grammar in it, and popularized its study.' He gave up his medicine in 1800, to become the Principal of the College of Fort William at Calcutta where new entrants to Company service underwent training. He was an irascible character and left the Company in a huff in 1804, and went back to England[13] where he contributed to popularizing and romanticizing India, delivering talks and calling himself a 'Professor of Hindoostaneee'. He joined the Company's school at Haileybury as Oriental Professor in 1806, retired in 1809, taught privately, from1816 to 1818, joined the Oriental Institution, from1818 to 1826, and after another stormy fifteen years of life died in Paris in 1841. The Hindustani that Gilchrist taught to the colonial officers, thus became the language of the Government for northern India, used for communication with the general populace.

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13. Gilchrist had another side to him, in fact an Australian connection. In a somewhat dubious deal he acquired 500 acres of land in Sydney from a medical colleague named Balmain, for the royal amount of 5 shillings. There is a suburb in Sydney called Balmain, once called, Gilchrist Place. After a colourful life with many financial ups and downs Gilchrist set up a scholarship based on his income from Australia for the spread of education.

Other scholars,[14] chief among them being James Prinsep,[15] deciphered the inscriptions found on stones and iron pillars in the far flung areas of India and the world realized the extent and culture of Asoka's empire. Indian history thus began to take shape as a process of its rediscovery and reinterpretation by European scholars: 'for a start, Indian history was pushed back two thousand years…two great classical civilizations were discovered…one of the richest literary traditions revealed to the outside world'.[16] Ancient texts, available with the Brahmins, which had earlier been dismissed as figments of imagination and myths, began to be taken seriously. India was found to have a culture and civilization rooted in the remote past and its law, customs and governance had the sanction of a long tradition. For the English people, and indeed all Europeans, the works of these scholars lent an aura to India. The British public and press were keen to know more about their empire that touched their romantic concepts with tales of fabulous wealth and exotic creatures. Sketches of Indian country and life became popular.[17] In this, too, the Indian scene was 'molded' and reinterpreted in the picturesque style then prevalent and fashionable in England. The sketches of the Daniells, Uncle and Nephew, 'reveal a very English interpretation',[18] according to Tillotson,[19] 'by overriding the intrinsic aesthetic with a different and alien one, Daniell's interpretation of (the subject) misrepresents it.'

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14. Sir Charles Wilkins (1750- 1836) translated the Bhagavad Gita, deciphered sanskrit inscriptions, first librarian of the India House library; published a grammar of Sanskrit in 1779; helped Sir Jones to found the Asiatic Society of Bengal; (*Dictionary of Indian Biography*, Buckland, 1905, reprint 1985).

15. James Prinsep (1799 – 1840) went to India in 1819 as assistant assay-master to the Calcutta Mint; at Benaras he constructed a new mint, and church, built a bridge over Karamnassa, published *Views and Illustrations of Benaras* 1825, secretary of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1832-8. He devoted himself to literary and scientific pursuits of many kinds, chemistry, minerology, meteorology, Indian inscriptions, numismatics and antiquities, deciphered the inscriptions on the Asoka edicts on pillars and rocks, introduced uniform coinage for the Company, a metallurgist and gave a definitive picture of India's history. (*Dictionary of Indian Biography*, Buckland, 1905, reprint 1985)

16. Keay, John *India Discovered*, HarperCollins, 1988 (first published 1981) p 14

17. Thomas Daniell (1749-1840) was in India painting for 10 years from 1784; published Oriental Scenery in 1808, and William Daniell artist at 14, nephew of Thomas, traveled thousands of miles, also published *A Picturesque Voyage To India, Zoography, The Panaroma of Madras*, 1832.

18. Tillotson, G.H.R., Indian Architecture and the English Vision, *South Asian Studies 7* (1991) pp 59-74

19. ibid



5

India depicted as decaying, mysterious, basically unchanging, and steeped in religion. Painting by T. & W. Daniells, *Hindoo Temple at Agouree River Soane Bihar.*

Donald Heald Rare Books, Prints and Maps

John Stuart Mill (1806-1873) the famous liberal scholar and philosopher of representative government, worked for most of his life at the India Office, but never advocated liberty or representation for India as he thought Indians to be civilizationally if not racially inferior to the English. Mill was no fool and knew very well the splendid achievements of India in the fields of art and philosophy, yet he took this position, for how else could he justify the colonial rule of a few over the millions of India. The colonial Orientalists studied and reconstructed Indians as a people steeped in ignorance and superstition; they declared them to be non-scientific and non-material, concerned only with religion, living in the past, unable to cope with the realities of technology, and therefore in need of

tutelage. This version of India and Indians was applied to all religious groups (Muslim, Hindu, Jain, Buddhist etc) and all ethnic groups (Punjabi, Bengali, etc) denying the wonderful kaleidoscope of India. It is a material need of colonialism to deny the colonized any semblance of maturity, creativity, or scientific outlook, for to them that breeds revolt. In the recasting of Indian history, they stamped eras as the Hindu period, and the Muslim period and yet inexplicably did not call their own, the Christian period. This kind of classification simplified India to an 'understandable' level, and made her convenient to rule. Fundamentally it negated the variety and subtleties of India that eluded the colonials, and reduced India to a set of formulae labeled and stamped for future use. This also dealt a blow to the cultural commonalities that existed among the people of India and only served to highlight the political-ruler-based differences.

In architecture too, the colonial construct required that everything in India be labeled on the basis of two main religions, Hindu and Muslim (Saracenic), and ignored the great variety and vitality that the immense size of the land generated. Said's lament of the goals of the Orientalist to codify and label is best exemplified in the works of James Fergusson[20] (1808-1886). He traveled far and wide in India, examining and studying the then extant building heritage. To the great variety of Indian buildings he promptly attached two main labels Hindu and Muslim (Saracenic). This extreme oversimplification has distorted the historiography of Indian Architecture since then. Neglecting the effects of variations in culture, climate, material and geology in the vast land of India, Fergusson's reductive thinking overemphasized the religious factor.

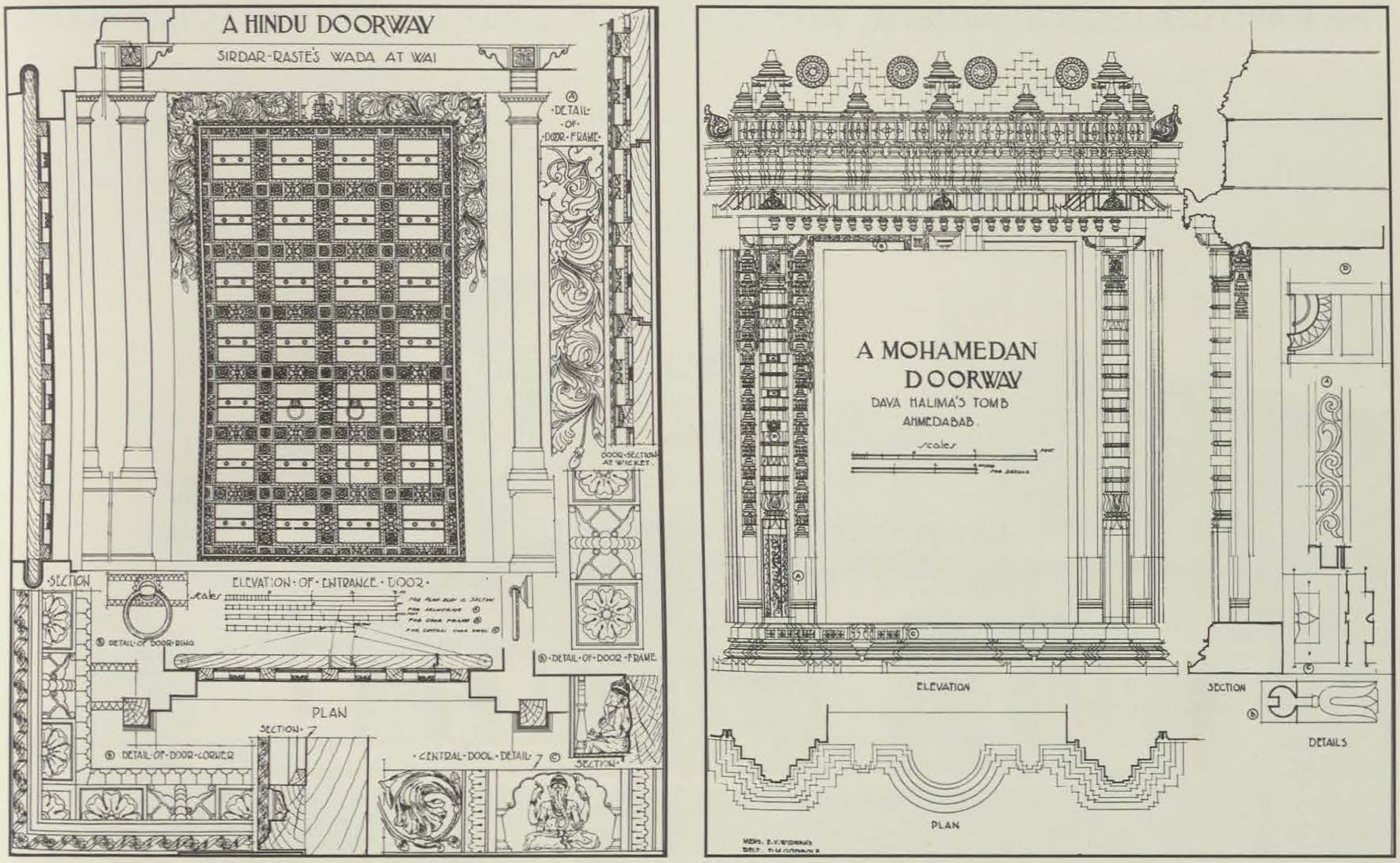
20. Fergusson , James (1808-1886) traveled widely in India to study styles of architecture, 1835-42, left India in 1845, joined the Royal Asiatic Society, 1840, Secretary to the First Commissioner of Public Works, 1869; wrote *Picturesque Illustrations of Ancient Architecture in Hindostan; Rock-cut Temples of India; An Historical Enquiry in the True Principles of Beauty in Art; History Indian and Eastern Architecture etc.* Received the gold medal for Architecture from the RIBA, and was often consulted on architectural questions. (*Dictionary of Indian Biography*, Buckland, 1905, reprint 1985)

He ignored the visible hybrid architecture used in all buildings other than purely religious buildings. The vast volume of non-religious buildings such as forts, residences, serais, dharamsalas etc., does not, for a moment, stand the kind of labels applied by Fergusson. But his influence was pernicious. 'The insistence on the centrality of a religious identity, which took shape in fixed architectural styles, defined an India that was in effect an "Orientalist" construct: a timeless land of tradition-bound peoples for whom religion alone had meaning'.[21] The construct had to perforce deny any creativity and cultural vitality of the local populace. Fergusson on the one hand could not deny the variety of architectural expression, yet on the other, he insisted on labeling all architecture in India either Hindu or Saracenic, and that too depending on the religious inclination of the ruler. Thus architecture under a Hindu prince became Hindu and under a Muslim Nawab became Saracenic. This was carried to an even more ridiculous extent when doors and marble screens (jalis) were termed as a Hindu door or a Muslim Jali. Nothing could be farther from the reality in the cities and towns of India. People did not think of doors and windows being either Hindu or Muslim. If only the colonial scholars had taken off their tinted glasses they would have seen the rich variety and intermix of the various traditions that India had inherited from different sources.

Thomas Metcalf's[22] narration of the process of choosing a 'style' for the Mayo College at Ajmer is a good example of how this simplistic labeling set out by Fergusson led to convoluted decision-making. Lord Mayo as Viceroy of India (1869-1872) decided on a scheme to educate the sons of the ruling princes of Rajputana in the British fashion, so that they may learn not only 'English and mathematics but games and discipline', and would thus revolutionize

21. Metcalf, Thomas R, *Modern India An Interpretive Anthology*, Sterling Publishers, 1990, *Architecture and the Representation of Empire*: India, 1860-1910, p 44

22. ibid.



6

Drawings purportedly of Hindu Door and Muslim Door in *The Design Development of Indian Architecture* by Professor Claude Batley, F.R.I.B.A. Formerly Professor of Architecture at the Government School of Art, Bombay, 1934, Alec Tiranti Ltd., London 1960

their states. 'The question of the appropriate architectural style for the college building provoked a controversy that raged for five years, involved submission of seven separate designs, and delayed the start of construction until 1878.'[23]

To start with Lord Mayo thought fit that the college should have a European ambience and J. Gordon,[24] appointed executive engineer for the college, prepared, in 1871, a Grecian design. The princes when consulted gave ready approval for the design chosen for them by their *'mai-bap'*.[25] Lord Mayo then changed his mind and saw fit that the college for Hindu princes should have a Hindu style. As an example he thought the best models were the palaces built by the Rajas of Deeg near Bharatpur and he instructed Gordon to visit these and prepare designs accordingly. A search for the best

23. ibid. p 47

24. Gordon had earlier designed the Montgomery Hall in Lahore in 1866 and had acquired a reputation as somewhat of an expert in the Grecian Style.

25. *mai-bap*, a phrase literally meaning parents, but implying the total masters, thus the English were referred to by the sycophant Rajas as their *mai-bap*.

THE MAYO COLLEGE AT AJMERE, WITH STATUE OF LORD MAYO IN THE FOREGROUND



From Photograph by Lala Din Dyal, Indore

7

Mayo College at Ajmer, an example of the confusion generated in the effort to delineate architecture in India on the basis of religion alone.

Hindu model was begun; the Director of Archaeological Survey, Cunningham, also joined in. 'For Cunningham, clearly the categories of Hindu and Muslim, in keeping with conventions of colonial sociology, were mutually exclusive.'[26] He declared that the palaces at Deeg were 'purely Mohammedan', and he knew, even if the Rajas of Deeg did not, what was Hindu and Muslim. That was the essence of the colonial mind. A new Viceroy, Lord Northbrook, broke through the maze, dismissed J. Gordon and another design and an architect later, commissioned Major Charles Mant.[27] In all this the princes readily agreed with whatever their colonial masters prescribed for them. To commission a local architect, of course, was a possibility that the British refused to envisage.

26. ibid. p 49

27. Major C Mant (1839-1881) an Engineer turned architect who had come to be noticed for his work at High School in Surat and a town hall in Kolhapur

Search for an Architecture of the Empire

When the Board of Directors of the East India Company appointed Richard Colley Wellesley,[28] Earl of Mornington, future Marquess Wellesley, as Governor General, in 1798, they could not have foreseen the change in attitude towards architecture that he would engender. The Earl was the first highly cultured aristocrat to accept appointment by the Company and he found the house used by his predecessors highly unsatisfactory. Within a month of his landing in Calcutta he directed Captain Charles Wyatt to prepare plans for a new mansion. Wyatt designed a scheme after Kedleston Hall in Derbyshire, the plans of which were available to him.[29] 'The new building was set in its own extensive twenty-six acre compound and the principal approaches were adorned with monumental neo-classical gateways… The concept of monumental gateways added to the imperial flavour of the design and provided impressive vistas from the surrounding streets.'[30] The Directors in London were taken aback at the colossal expense and maintained that they had 'been kept in total ignorance of the project… (leading) to his (Wellesley's) recall in 1805'.[31] Not everyone was unhappy. Lord Valentia,[32] a visitor, gave voice to the Governor General's imperial sentiment, 'I wish India to be ruled from a palace, not from a country house; with the ideas of a Prince, not with those of a retail-dealer in muslins and indigo.' This was a qualitative change for an endeavor that had begun as a trading enterprise. The disdain, even contempt, for the trader, the dealer in muslin and indigo, took hold among the elite of the British administration and forever the traders were given the deprecatory title of '*boxwallahs*'. The focus shifted from the intrepid trader to

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28. Wellesley, R.C., Marquess (1760-1842) Governor of Madras 1797, Governor General 1798-1805
29. Davies P., *Splendours of the Raj, British Architecture in India, 1660-1947*, Penguin Books, p 64
30. ibid., p66
31. ibid., p 69; Wellesly was recalled not only for his expense on the house but also for his costly wars.
32. Valentia, George Annesley, Lord (1770-1844), visited Calcutta 1803, returned home 1805.

the empire builders, the soldiers and the administrators. The Company began to acquire imperial trappings in the display of power,[33] as expressed in the use of urban space and design of monumental architecture, claiming succession to the imperial pomp of the Mughals. This was a radical departure from the earlier humbler beginnings.

The earliest buildings that the British built, were the small well-defended warehouses and factories, where goods were stored and processed, mainly drying in the open air for packing, and made ready for the arrival of ships for onward transmittal. The outlook was rugged and robust, with small window openings and very much in the nature of a fort. This precaution for defense was severely tested when Sivaji attacked the trading post in Surat in 1671 and the English fought off the Marhattas. The buildings were arranged along the periphery with an open space in the middle. Later with the addition of a wall on the outside, the whole became a defendable fort. The buildings made use of local stone and timber and local craftsmen, and perhaps the ship's carpenter supervised the construction. Stone was used for the foundations and ground-floor walls, lime from limestone or seashells, was used as the cementing material.

The growing confidence of the colonists in their ability to survive despite the very high proportion of men lost to disease and war in the early period, exhibited itself in the growing maturity of the buildings. The barely comfortable and utilitarian structures began to be replaced with those reminding the colonists of their homes and the grandeur of their countries. 'These were erected by amateur architects, dilettanti, or more often, by military engineers using available pattern books for prototypes, and they employed

33. See: Vandal, M.P. Use of Urban Space as an Expression of Power in *Journal of the Indian Institute of Architects* April 1993

considerable skill and ingenuity in their design.'[34]

Among the relatively small group of Company staff, architectural education on the Western pattern was nonexistent and 'self-instruction was the most common form of practical knowledge using published reference books and architectural treatises.'[35] The works of British architects such as Gibbs, Chambers, Stuart and Revett and the Adam Brothers were available in Calcutta and Madras together with French and Italian books. Others besides military engineers also consulted them and individuals such as C.K. Robinson, P.P. Parker, James Prinsep and Claude Martin were all self-taught enthusiasts with considerable personal skills. The Company grew in stature and wealth. 'Architecture was vested with immense symbolic significance. It could be used as an instrument of policy as well as an expression of paramountcy...many felt that the parsimonious attitude of the East India Company diminished both its political stature and commercial prospects.'[36]

The British and the Company's many workers, the writers,[37] factors and merchants, accumulated wealth, mainly through their private trade, which the company tolerated. Growing wealth was bound to manifest itself in grander and more luxurious buildings for the workers, in addition to the fact that it pronounced to the natives, the power and stature of the Company. The Writers' Building in Calcutta, as the name implies, was built in 1780 to house the large number of writers working for the company. When it was built it was a utilitarian, vast and austere building, reflecting the extreme concern of the Company to avoid any expense on grandiose building. As the British hold on the country consolidated, and with the growth of imperial self-awareness, the original façade was embellished

34. Davies, P. *op. cit.*, p 12

35. ibid., p 13

36. Davies, P., *op cit*

37. The English servants of the Company were divided into four classes: writers, factors, junior merchants and senior merchants.' Chaudhuri, Nirad, C. *Robert Clive of India*, Barrie & Jenkins 1976.

8

Writers Building was given three different facades as the company progressed from a thrifty trading house, to a manager of large estates and finally the harbinger of imperial grandeur.

Bourne & Shepherd, Calcutta and Bombay, ca 1915



with pedimented porticos in the mid-19th century. The result was somewhat awkward porches with even more ill-matching pediments, done with amateurish and unsure hands. Finally in 1880 as the imperial sentiment took hold, the entire block was refaced with a certain maturity and authority, albeit fake at places, to reflect Victorian imperial and civic pride.[38]

The early buildings in Madras, Bombay and Calcutta, the three presidency capitals, developed their own particularities of transplanted European architecture. Each of the cities had at its core a massive fort, the seat of the colonial Government for the city and its hinterland. The fort portrayed the strength of the colonial administration and arrayed outside its ramparts were mercantile offices, civic buildings, churches, clubs, official residences, and other structures required by the colonial elite. Each of them was adorned with buildings of some architectural distinction although, as previously mentioned, the Board of Directors in London did not

38. See Davies, P., *op cit*, page 57, for the interesting transformation,

always approve of the large expenditure on building. In Madras and Calcutta the predominant architectural motif was Classical. Madras buildings ranged in style from the Wren inspired Renaissance style of Fort St George (c 1760) to the Greek revivalism of the Banqueting Hall (1802) and Collectorate (1817). In Calcutta Wellesley's Baroque Government House (1802) was surrounded by such classically proportioned structures as the Doric Town Hall (1813) and Metcalf Hall (1840). Bombay's major civic structures were clothed in Gothic forms, the style which, much later, reached its acme in the Railway Terminus.

The Experiment at Hyderabad

The constraints imposed by the Company on its officers' spending on building, pushed the imperial desire to take a slightly different route. A large part of British India comprised the local states that accepted the British as the paramount power and surrendered their sovereignty. Under the agreement, such states could only maintain a limited number of troops and could not enter into any agreement or treaty with any other power without the permission of the paramount power – the Company. The British in turn allowed the local ruler almost full powers to rule as he pleased and, to ensure his continued loyalty, deputed an officer as 'Resident' along with a detachment of troops for which the ruler paid. The Resident was very much in the nature of an overseer or a supra-ruler of the State, who ensured the ruler's loyalty to the British. Hyderabad was one such state. The resident James Achilles Kirkpatrick[39] decided to build a new house for himself and got the Nizam to give the sixty acres of land, and even pay for the construction. The Nizam had little choice in the matter. Freed of the Company's audit, Kirkpatrick gave full rein to the imperial sentiment. The immense house was

39. Kirkpatrick, James Achilles (1764-1805), succeeded his brother William as resident at Hyderabad in 1797, suppressed and finally eliminated all French influence in the State at minimal cost and won the confidence of Wellesley the Governor General. Lived in grand style and married a girl from the Nizam's Court.

begun in 1803 and designed by Lt Samuel Russell[40] of the Madras Engineers.[41] '... the house was an architectural expression of supreme power intended for political ends'[42] ...built in the Palladian style, set amongst 'arcaded walkways, colonnades, wings and stable buildings approached via a triumphal archway from the river frontage.'[43] The combination of the classical European styles and the imperial expression was repeated in Mysore and at a lower scale in other native states as a symbol of authority and power.

The pageantry and brilliance of the Mughal court is too well known and documented to be repeated or elaborated here. Nevertheless it is worthwhile to remember that when the Mughal Emperor traveled, his camp was a veritable city. The court, nobles, *zenana*, royal guards, imperial troops and camp followers could add up to more than 20,000 persons, who had to be housed and fed at every stop, and then moved on the next day. Forage for the animals, in thousands, food stocks for the journey to the next stop where replenishments could be had, provision of sanitation facilities, were issues that required a high degree of organization. Elephants, cavalry, drum beaters and thousands of foot soldiers left no doubt about the power and control of the Emperor. The British effort was to emulate if not outdo the ex-rulers.

The public building program, given a grand direction by Wellesley's Government House, soon acquired a political significance. As Sten Nilsson[44] has pointed out, their Classical forms 'began to contain forces that were not to be found in the prototypes; they stood as symbols of a conquering militarism and the culture of a race which considered itself superior.' The use of urban space, its gradations and levels, progress of processions in civic areas, began to be

40. Davies, Philip p 95

41. Dalrymple in "*White Mughals*" contests this and thinks that Russell had little role to play in the design and was only involved in supervision and that too when the building was nearing completion.

42. Davies, Philip. *op cit*

43. ibid.

44. Nilsson, Sten *European Architecture in India*, Faber & Faber, London 1968

designed and calculated for political effect. As Simonetta says, 'The use of space and the importance of the movement through different planes transformed architecture into a designed stage on which the powerful could appear.'[45]

The remnants of past grandeur could be seen in the surviving regional courts. The state of Oudh with Lucknow as the center had accepted British protection and 'tutelage' during the period of Warren Hastings. The rulers, the famous Nawabs of Oudh, with little to do, devoted resources and time to the cultural field. Musicians, dancers, poets, artists, local architects who had lost their patrons, came to Oudh. The Nawabs welcomed them and there was a resurgence of Mughal culture, albeit affected by the European presence, on a small scale in Oudh in general and Lucknow in particular. In the building of a set of residences and their spatial organization, the Nawab demonstrated the potential of Mughal architecture (called the Indo-Saracenic by English scholars) to express power.

The grandiosity of 'Farhat Baksh', the royal complex developed by Nawab Saadat Ali Khan, 1798-1814, was emphasized by a wide road, almost two miles long, which started from this royal citadel, connecting it with the hunting lodge of 'Dilkusha' and its stables. Nawab Wajid Ali Shah, 1847-1856, adopted a similar scenic perspective in the royal citadel Kaiserbagh. In his royal complex, often described as a city within a city because of its vast dimensions, the effect was obtained by a sequence of gateways, a typical architectural device for the celebration of power.'[46] The adaptation of the classical architecture of the Mughal empire could be seen in the revision of the 'Indo-Saracenic' style, which suggested different aesthetic preferences linked to the domination of the colonial

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45. Simonetta, Casci *Lucknow Nawabs: Architecture and Identity*, EPW (*Economic and Political Weekly*) September 2002

46. ibid.

masters, who could not be forgotten or ignored, in as much as it attested to the gradual transition from a wholesome independence to a subjugation. The rulers of Oudh even in the twilight of their independence set standards for the colonial rulers to match.

The question of the appropriate style of architecture for a particular building with its political overtones reached the highest levels of the colonial administration in India. The Public Works Member of the Viceroy's Council in 1877 wrote: 'there can be little doubt that buildings for native purposes, such as the following should be built in some form of native architecture: temples, mosques, colleges, schools, markets, hospitals, asylums; whilst those specially for the comforts and wants of Europeans such as residences, churches, offices, railway buildings, etc are more appropriate for some European style adapted to the various climates of India.'[47] This setting-apart of the rulers and natives is a consistent attitude of the colonial mindset, and the attitude prevailed despite all scholarship to study and understand India. The depth of study only made it less crude and covered it with a thin veneer of sophistication. The 'proper' architecture for India as a political statement became a serious point of discussion as greater control on India led to increase in building activity.

The know-all colonial administrators armed with the fruits of the scholarship of Jones, Fergusson *et al,* laid down the law[48] that governed the lives of Indians, set out the education pattern and established guidelines even in the fields of arts, architecture, painting etc. They not only transformed the economy of India to serve their colonial interests but also sought to put culture into a straitjacket that made the native mind a subservient and meek sycophant. The

47. Cited by Metcalf, Thomas R., *Architecture and the Representation of Empire: India 1860-1910* in *Modern India, An Interpretive Anthology* ed. Metcalf, Sterling Publishers, 1990

48. Literally through the stupendous work of Macaulay, Thomas Babington, 1800-1859 who as Legal Member was largely responsible for the preparation of the Penal Code and Code of Criminal Procedure; was also the author of the famous minute on education, which created the present day English-speaking elite of the subcontinent.



9

'Noor Mahal' a Palace of the Nawab of Bhawalpur, a structure transplanted from the cold, wet and grey climate of Europe to the hot and dry desert of South Punjab.

colonial state used a portion of the immense resources that it gathered from its subjects to extend patronage to the arts – but arts filtered according to its own set of guidelines. Native painters found greater reward in portraiture of the rulers and scenery painting in the picturesque tradition, as set out by the Daniells, and abandoned their own particular tradition of painting. Craftsmen produced artifacts to catch the fancy of the Sahibs and Mem-sahibs. To further add to this was the attitude of the local Nawabs and Rajas, and above all, the class of landlords created by the British to reward their loyalist servants particularly in the Punjab. In the middle of the scorching hot desert, the Nawab of Bhawalpur built a replica of a European chateau, suitable for the cold, wet, light-less climate of the Occident, as a palace for himself and called it the Noor Mahal.

The dominance in the cultural sphere was reinforced by the fact that the State, due to its monopoly of resources, was the largest employer, the biggest industrialist and the most effective patron. Architecture acquired importance as a field in which the particular manner of building carried great significance, and as the most visible of the arts, the symbolic import of architecture was not lost on the Government. It is not surprising, therefore, that in a country that built the Taj, the Ajanta Caves and the Konarak Temples, the Government only felt comfortable with architects imported from England and an architecture it could control. Native architecture was duly admired, but the native architects, the source of the vision, were ignored. Their architecture had been reductively labeled and categorized to religious nomenclature. Cunningham,[49] in the tradition of the British 'discoverers' of India[50] documented hundreds of buildings with a zeal and dedication that can only be admired. He, like Fergusson, categorized, sorted and labeled the buildings in the religious nomenclature and despite their differences in time and

felt to be a Christian and national style, even though, in practice, its actual expression owed far more to Venice and Italy than to English medievalism. Later proponents of the argument favoured the style of Wren and the English Renaissance as the quintessence of English values. They were opposed by the revivalist school which maintained that, there existed in India, an uninterrupted living tradition in architecture, connecting the present and past. The true policy should have been to shun all imported forms and ideas and to foster this living tradition by sustaining the Indian master craftsman or mistri whose craft skills and expertise were in danger of dying out from lack of patronage. From time to time the tensions between both schools of thought erupted into outright hostility. The conventional aesthetic imperialist who ran the Public Works Department as an elite club, looked aghast upon the interfering civilian architects who wanted to go native and adopt indigenous architectural apparel. The revivalists, on the other hand, were exasperated with the obstructive nature of the PWD, and as late as 1920, John Begg,[51] complained that 'the architect in India is handicapped at the outset by the universal ignorance of his functions'.

Metcalf cites the interesting debate where speaking before the Society of Arts in 1873, T. Roger Smith[52] urged: 'as our administration exhibits European justice, order, law, energy and honour – and that in no hesitating or feeble way – so our buildings ought to hold up a high standard of European art. They ought to be European both as a rallying point for ourselves, and as raising a distinctive symbol of our presence to be beheld with respect and even with admiration by the natives of this country.' Opposing him

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51. Begg, J. FRIBA, Consulting Architect to the Government of India, preface to *Educational Buildings in India*, Government of India Publication, 1911

52. Smith, Thomas Roger (1830 - 1903), architect, born at Sheffield on 14 July 1830, was only son of the Rev. Thomas Smith of Sheffield by his wife Louisa Thomas of Chelsea. After private education he entered the office of Philip Hardwick [q. v.] and spent a year and a half in travel before beginning independent practice in 1855. Worked in Bombay for a short while in 1864, returned same year.

was William Emerson,[53] 1843-1924, with the view that the British should not carry into India a new style of architecture but should follow the example of those whom they had supplanted as rulers, the Muslims, who 'seized upon the art indigenous to the countries conquered, adapting it to suit their own needs and ideas'; indeed he insisted it was impossible for the architecture of the west to be suitable for the natives of the east. Such debates did not reflect solely aesthetic considerations; it involved the larger concepts of national identity and purpose. Begg joined the debate, 'The advocates of a Western manner propose to adapt their style to the conditions of the country. That is surely to Orientalize it. But would not to do so be equally likely to result in a 'bastard product' as would say, the Westernizing of Oriental art?'[54]

The choice of styles, the arrangement of space within a building and of course the decision by the Government to erect a particular monument, testified to a vision of the Empire. Most central was the concern with political effect. 'It is in comparatively recent years only that architecture has received serious attention from the guardians of the country, ... India is not yet giving the best of her brains to it. Youths of the class that is producing plenty of lawyers and doctors are hardly yet seeking careers in the study and practice of architecture. The time has come for us to think out and declare a definite architectural policy for India; just as we have thought out a railway policy and an educational policy.'[55]

The British adopted what they considered the Indo-Saracenic style as being the most appropriate. The British endeavored to lay claim to a direct line of descent from the Rajputs to the Mughals to themselves. 'James Ransome, consulting architect to the

53. Emerson, William Sir, Worked in Bombay and Allahabad; moved to England in 1895 commissioned to design the Victoria Memorial Hall Calcutta 1901-02.

54. Begg, J. FRIBA, Consulting Architect to the Government of India, December1912; *Note on the Development of Indian Architecture*, in *Report on Modern Indian Architecture* by Gordon Sanderson, under the direction of Dr. J. H. Marshall, Director General of Archaeology in India, published Government Press, Allahabad, 1913

55. Begg, J. FRIBA, *Report on Modern Architecture* op. cit.

Government of India, in 1905 discussed, without any sense of incongruity, the Mughal Tomb of Salim Chisti at Fatehpur Sikri (c 1580) and the Albert Museum at Jaipur (1876) as being representative samples of Saracenic work.'[56]

However there was another side to these imperial posturings, seeking to underpin the 'illusions of permanence', which was the great mass of building, slightly away from the public eye, which facilitated the Raj. The allocation of resources of the State was above all determined by the colonial interests of control, euphemistically called the defense of India. The Indian Army, the Railways and the police, as the major instruments of control, got the lion's share. The major volume of building activity in the country served these three institutions in the shape of cantonments, housing, railway stations, and police posts. The houses were literally in thousands. For all these, ever since the days of the cost-conscious Company, emphasis was laid on standardization, and construction was carried out according to the designs prescribed by the Central Department. The engineering service of the army and the railways published handbooks that laid down specifications to be followed. This official architecture, repetitive, monotonous and usually ugly, quite different from the imperial or grand architecture, spread to all corners of the Indian Empire creating models for the local sycophants of the Raj to emulate. The discerning among the British rulers, particularly those who had a chance to work at the lower levels of the Raj and be in touch with the local conditions, bemoaned the monotonous effects.

Kipling[57] observed, 'To the native eye the striking facts of modern India are things that many Europeans take as a matter of course – improved roads and bridges, railways and their miraculous

56. Cited by Metcalf, T *An Imperial Vision, Indian Architecture and Britain's Raj,* p84

57. John Lockwood Kipling, founder Principal, Mayo School of Industrial Arts, Lahore.

straightness and truth of line, and their substantial buildings, our military cantonments in long monotonous lines and our civil stations. These, though occasionally ugly enough, are imposing'.[58] The greater evil, in Kipling's view, was that the Indians who sought to emulate their English rulers saw these 'ugly' structures as models to follow.

Kipling was not alone and Col. Swinton Jacob, engineer/architect at Jeypore, too, wrote, 'The Indian Public Works Department, as a body, has not hitherto been successful in its architectural efforts…'[59] Kipling and Jacob were among the earliest to forcefully argue for the rehabilitation of the native crafts and architecture, however they were faced with the 'Imperial Construct of India' for which the political effect carried greater weight than aesthetics.

The Nagging Living Tradition

India has a long tradition of assimilating influences from the outside. The British were not the first invaders, nor the first harbingers of ideas and practices that the local population faced and adapted to create a new set of cultural patterns. The synthesis of the old and new, the hybridization, was richer after the experience. Architecture in India, before the coming of the British, had a variety ranging from the buildings built by the Imperial Mughals, to the small town house of a trader. Architecture varied according to the cultural and comfort requirements of a people within a region. It carried a distinctly regional proclivity and identity. Houses, shops and workshops of the Hindus and Muslims showed little differences based on religion. The only distinctly identifiable buildings were mosques and temples. While Mughals adopted and accepted statues of animals incorporated in the brackets of veranda shades, the Hindu Rajas had begun to use the dome and the arch to cover larger

58. Kipling, J L., *The Journal of Indian Art*, op. cit.

59. Jacob, Swinton S., Col., Engineer to Jeypore State, in *Preface to Collection of Drawings of works near Delhi and Agra and parts of Rajputana* (Plates) , Rajputana, 1890



10

Stone-brackets sculpted in the shape of animals and murals with human figures in Jahangir's Quadrangle in Lahore Fort show that the divide in architecture based on religion was not as rigid as the European 'orientalists' would have us believe.

spans that the trabeated (called Hindu by Fergusson) design could not do. It was more a question of using the new technology that came with the invaders from the West, than any spiritual symbolism attached to the arch and dome. When used in a mosque or a tomb, the dome or the arch did achieve a symbolic meaning, but the particular meaning and significance was linked to the usage of the building rather than any inherent spiritual value of the building element. When used for secular structures, such as a serai or a haveli, the same element cannot and did not carry any spiritual meaning.

However the official chroniclers, classifiers and labelers, paid



11

Domes in the temple complex at Katas equally demonstrate that the use of building elements was based on practical rather than religious reasons.

little attention to the vast amount of architectural work that was common among people of different religious inclinations within a region. In their efforts to understand India, they simplified it, negated its wonderful variety, and pronounced their opinions on the suitability of this or that type of architecture for the buildings to be built by the Raj. When Wellesley decided to build himself a grand palace to impress the local populace he chose a European style, which immediately precluded the commissioning of any local architect. Even when the British decided to incorporate local architectural themes, such as in the case of the Mayo College at Ajmer, no local architect was considered competent to carry out

the work. In a land full of architectural masterpieces, the soul-lifting temples of South India, the imaginative stone carvings and paintings, the devotional pilgrimage sites, each decorated and embellished with a conviction flowing out of faith and love, they could not find local architects of merit – the fact is that they did not want to find any!

When the supply of engineers for the ever-enlarging public works such as roads, bridges, army cantonments, became constricted the Government established schools of engineering to supply a class of technician who could supervise and convey instructions to the workers. A course or two on architecture, based on the European Styles, were taught to such students but no full-term course on architecture was introduced. While the local architects trained in the traditional mode were not recognized as such, there was no effort to open schools of architecture. The profession of architecture was thus throttled due to lack of official patronage and absence of any meaningful training.

Some among the British in India, however, could not help noticing the living tradition of building that had been stifled in the official corridors, but was very much alive in the buildings constructed by the native traders all over India. The trading classes in India were relatively free of cultural dominance as compared to the rulers or feudal *jagirdars* created by the British; however they were not immune to or unwilling to adapt what they thought were points worth emulating. That made for interesting architecture and was commented upon by visitors and the district officials. The news reached London.

The Honorary Secretary of the India Society, T.W. Rolleston in

a letter[60] dated 20th November 1910, addressed to the India Office wrote, 'The Executive Committee of the India Society which has been recently formed in London for the purpose of promoting the study and appreciation of Indian Culture in all its aesthetic aspects, is anxious to obtain the support of the Government of India for the efforts it is making to collect materials relating to the living traditions of Indian Arts and Architecture and ... that to all artists, architects and art workers in Europe the fact that Indian art has an unbroken tradition of design and craftsmanship handed down from remote antiquity is a matter of even deeper interest than the magnificence of its ancient monuments ... the importance of investigating the principles and practice of the living art and craft of India has not received anything like adequate attention'.[61] The Society proceeded to comment on the state of art in India: 'It is unfortunately the case that owing to the spread of European fashions among the English-educated classes in India, and to the departmental procedure in placing a very high premium upon the work of designers and craftsmen who merely imitate the commercial art of modern Europe, ... India is gradually losing an invaluable part of her traditional art and craftsmanship.'[62] The Society then requested that the surveyors of the Archaeological Department be instructed, while on tour, to 'photograph interesting types of modern Indian buildings in the districts ... and to take notes of the names and addresses and local rates of remuneration of the principal craftsmen concerned in the designing and decoration of them'.[63] The letter traveled through the Governor General in Council[64] to the Public Works Department which then instructed that 'the Superintendent, Mohammadan and British Monuments, Northern Circle, may be asked to interest himself in, and report

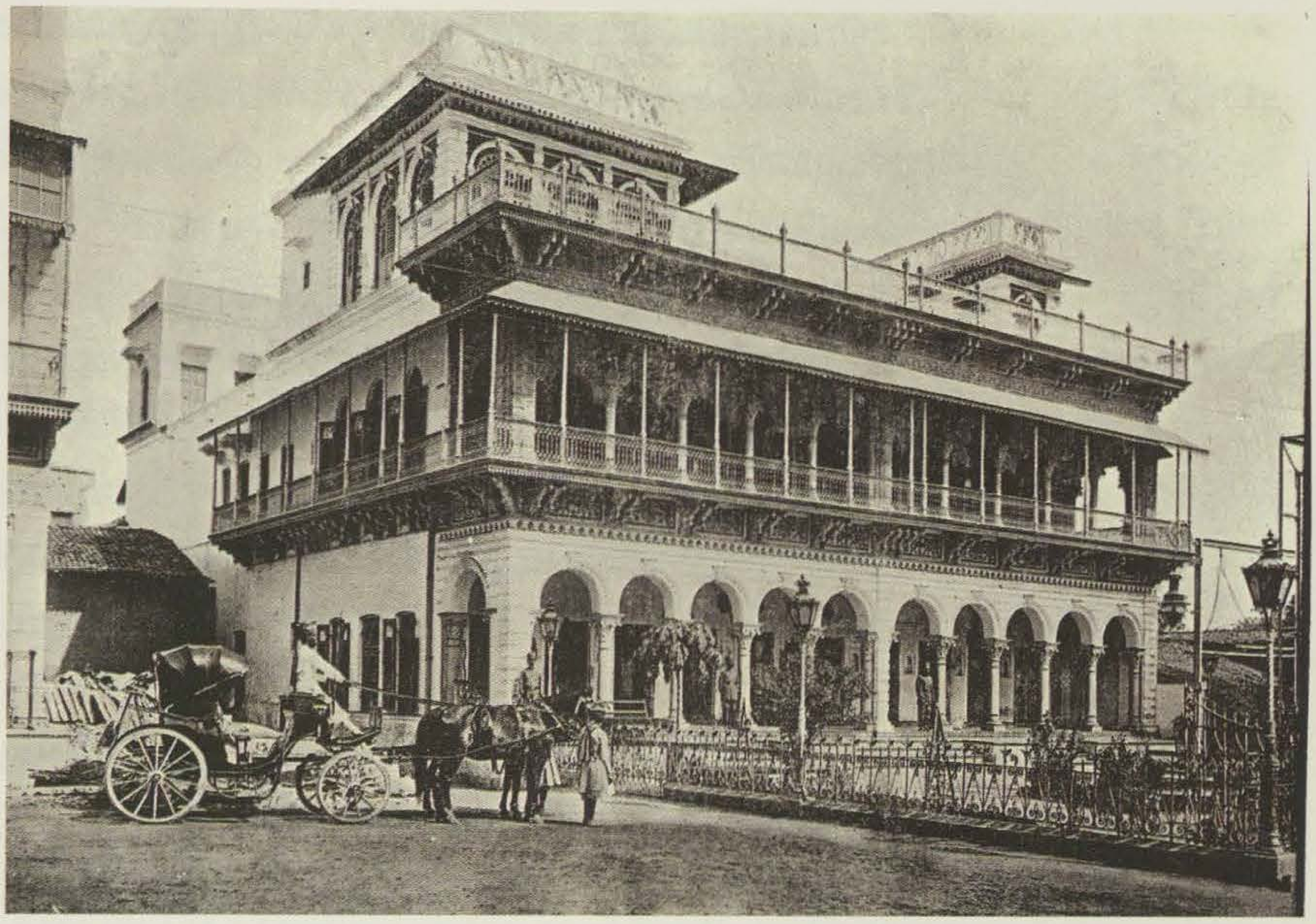
60. *Report on Modern Indian Architecture*, 1913, Government Press, United Provinces, Allahabad. Includes 'Note *on the Development of Indian Architecture'* by John Begg, 1912, Consulting Architect to the Government of India, 1912 and an interesting Foreword by Gordon Sanderson, 1911.

61. ibid.

62. ibid.

63. ibid.

64. The correct title was 'Governor General and Viceroy of India', Governor General for the directly administered India and Viceroy for the Princely States.



12

A house at Allahabad illustrated in *Report on Modern Indian Architecture, 1913,* to show the assimilation of European influences in Indian Architecture.

upon the matter...'[65]

Mr. Gordon Sanderson, (an architect) Superintendent Mohammadan and British Monuments, Northern Circle, of the Archaeological Department, surveyed part of his 'territory' and produced a *'Report on Modern Indian Architecture'* printed by the Government Press, United Provinces, 1913. The report, with 93 illustrations, conclusively shows the Indian designers of the time to be creative and assimilating the European influence without losing their own cultural bearings. The buildings are residences, *dharmsalas*, temples, and such other buildings of non-Governmental use. The districts covered are Delhi, Agra, Allahabad, Lucknow, Ajmer, Bhopal, Bikaner, Gwalior, Jaipur, Jodhpur and Udaipur. John Begg the consulting architect to the Government of India in a note to the book says: 'These photographs should amply prove to anyone who might have a doubt on the point, the fact of the survival to the present day of a living tradition ... the art though

65. Letter No. 76, Calcutta, the 6th March 1911 from H. Sharp, Joint Secretary to the Government of India, Department of Education, Archaeology and Epigraphy, to the Secretary to the Government of the United Provinces , Public Works Department

still living is dormant...is it worth reawakening? Should we allow it to die the natural death that from one cause or another has overtaken nearly all similar art traditions in other countries or should we try to give it a new lease of life?'[66] 'I think ... the living tradition is an artistic asset of such incalculable value that we cannot afford to allow it to die out; that it is well worth re-awakening even though the complete process should be lengthy and interim results not acceptable maybe to all.'[67] Despite all the commendable effort by the Society, the report did not have any discernible effect on the architectural policies of the Raj.

Kipling too, saw the vitality of the local art in the craft of the people. He was uniquely placed as no other Englishman, a Sahib, could ever be. As Principal of the Mayo School of Arts he traveled all over the Punjab looking for talent to admit to the school, and also inspecting various schools of crafts that the Government had set up. About architecture he writes, 'It is to the domestic architecture of the country that we must refer if we wish to make a just idea of the present state and future prospects of Indian design as a living force.'[68] He further emphasized that in the small-scale domestic architecture, some semblance and potential of design remained, 'The development of local effort under sympathetic guidance seems to point to some advantages of local self-Government, which rightly understood, means more than the introduction of elections. The highly centralized departmental system, which prescribes the form of all buildings in one uniform pattern, is fatal to right movement in art, while measures which develop local intelligence, and which, leaving a district under the guidance of its own natural leaders to form its own projects and employ its own agency, relieve it from the necessity of submitting designs for departmental sanction may give free play to the skill and the fancy

66. Begg, J. FRIBA, *Report on Modern Architecture* op. cit.

67. ibid.,

68. Kipling J. L., *The Journal of Indian Art, op cit.*

of the native craftsman in his own natural line. It is on the architecture of today that preservation of Indian art in any semblance of healthy life now hinges.'[69] Noting the changes occurring in the work of local designers as a result of exposure to Western design and ideas he says, 'The development now actually in progress is no artificial novelty for the importation of which a definite date can be assigned. It is rather the necessary result of an involuntary adaptation to the varying circumstance of modern life, and is the more unfelt because the laws so ceaselessly modified are oral and traditional, not written.'[70]

Kipling also sensed the changes that the colonial domination was inflicting on, 'The educated classes i.e. those who have been taught English', for he realized that they had begun to 'dislike indigenous forms and the trading and money-lending classes alone now seem to be the support of the mistry, or native builder and architect. ... this individual is the sole depositary and trustee of the principles and traditions which form the roots of Indian art. The best men of the class are singularly modest and only too much inclined to self-depreciation when their work is compared with that of European origin... and will humbly apologize for their beautiful designs as a poor country effort...If the mercantile classes of native society are distinguished by their conservative adherence to ancestral usage, the landed gentry who are on visiting terms with European officials, cherish equally strong aspirations in the opposite direction. To relieve the monotony of their eventless life many of them (landed gentry) spend large sums of money every year in building, and keep a native architect as a regular member of their domestic establishment. But he is warned that nothing in Hindustani style can be tolerated; some Government office in the civil station or the last new barracks in the nearest military cantonments are the palatial edifices that he is expected to emulate.'[71] Thus for those colonials willing to see, the two streams resulting from the impact of the Raj on the sensitivities of the natives, were clear and evident.

69. Ibid.,

70. Ibid.,

71. Ibid.,

efforts, made at the center, of the official architecture. This public architecture was the work of British engineers and their locally trained assistants. The center of such training of assistant engineers was the school of engineering at Roorkee, detailed in a subsequent chapter, and had only a course or two in architecture, and that too, based on the European tradition. Their students knew more about the classical columns of the Greeks and Romans than about any experience of India and Indian architecture. In this too the assistant engineers and draftsmen with their limited knowledge of European architecture were deemed superior to the native architects of taste and merit, the *mistris* who were just allowed to wither away.

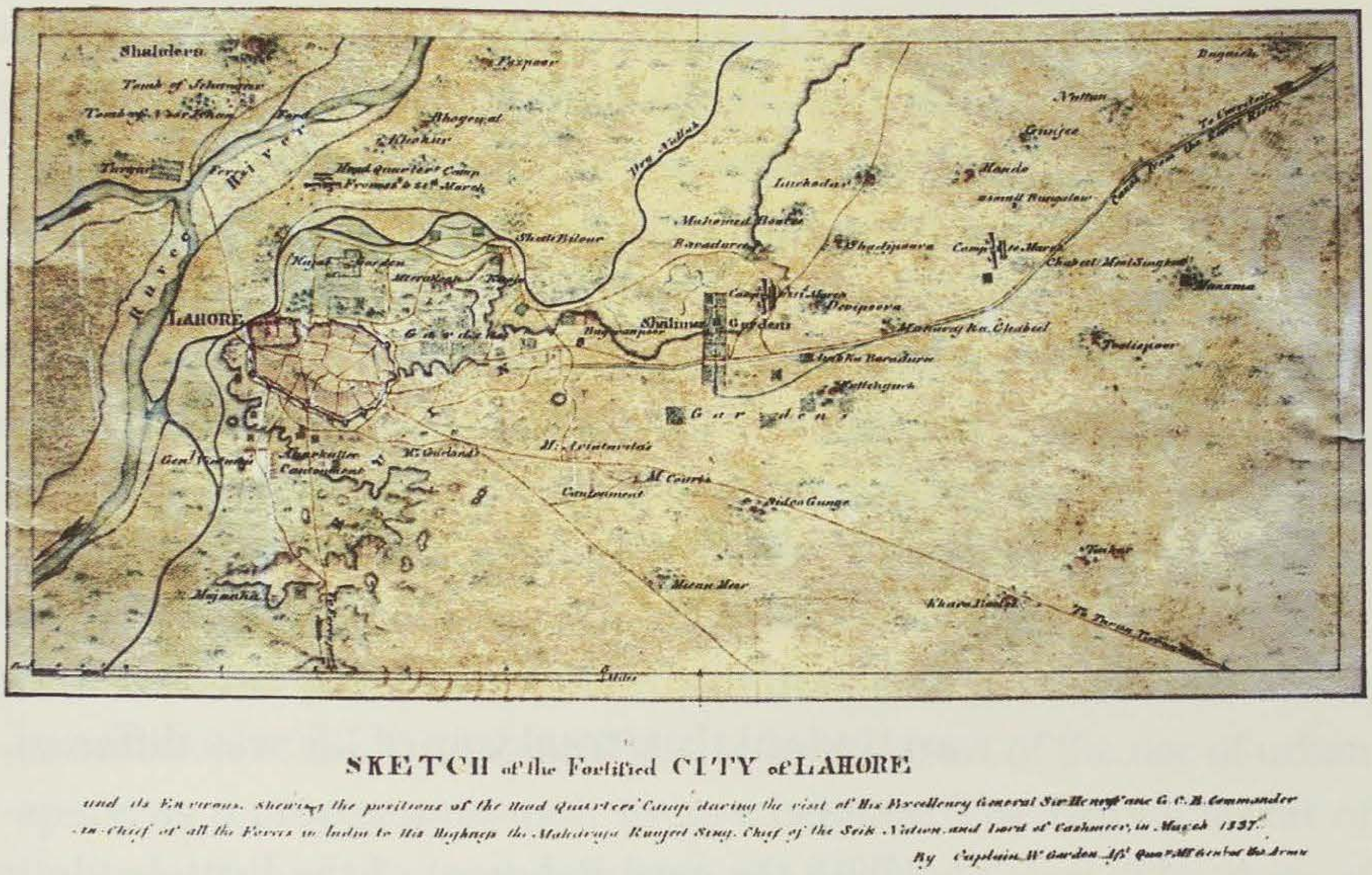
The architecture of the Raj, with its political and administrative content, thus affected Indian society at multiple levels. At the imperial level it was grand and forthright in proclaiming the power of the rulers, to the subservient native Princes it set standards to ape, and to the native architects it gave pointers to incorporate in their understanding of building and art. The British battled for the Punjab from 1846 to 1849, that is, the later part of their stay in India, and brought to the region a well-developed philosophy of government and cultural attitudes. Their interventions in the urban landscape of the city, its arts and architecture and the general living patterns of the city left deep impressions. The architecture of their buildings in Lahore has a variety of expressions, ranging from European classical importations, to the Indo-Saracenic as understood by British architects-engineers. A study at a regional level, Lahore, reveals that the architecture of the Raj, in the hands of British designers, was sometimes successful, as in the case of the General Post Office, and at others, less so as in the case of the Town Hall. Ultimately however the interaction of the colonials and the natives, spread over centuries, led to a fusion of architectural idioms which has become a part of the native heritage.

Lahore: A City Transformed

While at the beginning of the 18th century there is no doubt that the British stumbled onto their possessions in India not quite wanting an Empire, by the middle of the 19th century, Empire was very much on their mind. Sind had been annexed in 1843 and covetous eyes were already being cast on the Punjab. An item appeared in '*The Illustrated London News*' of 28th March, 1846 saying: 'if the Punjaub (sic) were placed under the immediate dominion of the British Crown… it might become a most valuable acquisition. It possesses great mineral wealth; its agricultural produce might be almost indefinitely multiplied, (emphasis added), by a judicious system of irrigation…'[1] Only the shrewd Maharaja of the Punjab had kept the British at bay.

Ranjit Singh, the Maharaja of the Punjab, died in 1839 and just ten years later his successors lost the kingdom of the Punjab[2] to the British. Since time immemorial the death or weakness of an Indian ruler signaled a fierce power struggle that debilitated the state and deprived it of any long-term security. The inability of the Indian rulers to develop a politically mature system of peaceful transfer of power, allowed outsiders to take advantage and walk into the power vacuum thus created. The British acquired a special expertise in this art of exploiting a volatile situation through manoeuver, deceit and double-crossing, pitting one contender against another, leading to the collapse of the body politic. The Sikh Army (Khalsa) fought valiantly at Muddkee, Sobran, Ferozeshah (1846), and Chichianwala, Gujrat (1849), but in essence was betrayed by its leadership. As brilliantly detailed by Khushwant Singh,[3] the

1. Quoted in *Officers of the the Punjab Commission* compiled and edited by Ch. Mohammad Ashraf, NEDA Publishers, Lahore, 1995, p16.
2. Ranjit Singh's Punjab extended on the East-West axis from the River Sutlej to Peshawar and from Kashmir to Multan & Bhawalpur on the North-South axis.
3. Khushwant Singh, *A History of the Sikhs Vol.2*, OUP, p 47.



13
Lahore, 1837. There was a series of gardens beyond the walled city both on the North and the South of the city with scattered settlements and camps of Sikh army units commanded by European mercenaries along the roads connecting Lahore with Delhi, Kasur and Multan.

British came within a hairsbreadth of defeat, nevertheless the Khalsa lost, and the British and the Dogra brothers, who gained Kashmir in the bargain, won. The Punjab was annexed and British troops occupied Lahore.

In 1849, according to Sir John Lawrence, the Chief Commissioner of the Punjab, Lahore had been reduced to a population of 90,000 most of which resided within the city walls. Starting with Nadir Shah's invasion in 1738, a century of strife in the Punjab left Lahore in a state that, 'beyond the walls, nothing was observable to the South-East but a vast expanse of uneven ground studded with crumbling mosques, domes and gateways…the station of Anarkali, with its adjuncts, … was scattered over an area of several square miles, over which extended the ruins of not one but several successive cities. The surface of this extraordinary plain is diversified by mounds, kilns, bricks, stones, broken masses of masonry, decaying structure, hollow excavations and all the debris of habitation that have passed away.'[4] The annexation of the Punjab by the British

4. Government of India Records years 1851-53, cited by S.M. Latif, *Lahore: Its History, Architectural Remains and Antiquities …* Lahore, 1892, Reprinted Sang-e-Meel Publications, 1994

laid the basis for a radical change in the prevalent cultural patterns and values of Lahore that had had a continuity and coherence for eight centuries since the founding of the city. The city had grown, flourished, suffered invasions and destruction, and yet survived through the Sultanate, the Mughal and Sikh periods with an uneven yet unbroken cultural evolution. The physical environment as a reflection of that culture also had a distinct character and consistency, which developed through the ages. The coming of the British was a break with the past. The new rulers were different in dress, language, behavior and custom; they had a tradition and history of their own; their religious and cultural roots, their literature, music, art, indeed their total way of life was different.

With the establishment of the British administration, therefore, new cultural and behavior patterns were introduced, which sections of the local population sought to emulate. The interaction of the old and the new alien values, led to a multiplicity of responses. As a result, inevitably, newer values and behavior patterns emerged, a synthesis, which was condemned or welcomed, depending on a viewpoint. The changing living styles led to changed built environment as expressed in the design of houses and shopping methods, and new urban patterns in street layout, providing paved roads and piped water supply, were adopted. The debate on a suitable style of architecture for the Raj received a new impetus in the context of the newly acquired territories of the Punjab and Lahore in particular. However the immediate objectives of the British, before any new initiatives in building could be taken, were to pacify and stabilize the social fabric. Very knowingly, the British combined force and pageantry in the Mughal tradition, to impress upon the local populace the *Company Bahadur's* power and right to rule.

Urban space in its scale and articulation has been a favorite medium of expression of the power of a ruler or a ruling class. Throughout history, from Roman Triumphal Arches, the city squares

of the Renaissance period, the unlimited vistas of the Baroque, Wren's London, Haussmann's Paris, to Lutyens' New Delhi, the layout and planning of cities has reflected the nature of the ruling power. Rulers impress people and hold them in awe of their power through an elaborate system of pageantry, display of wealth and force, rallies and processions. The size and scale of urban space and grand architecture within the context of which such displays are held, add to the awe-inspiring effect. They pronounce to the population at large the grand ability of the rulers to harness resources at the majestic level. The British, who had already had more than two hundred years experience of Indian affairs at the time of the annexation of the Punjab in 1849, refined the art of the use of urban space as a propaganda-tool, to new heights. The British learnt of the importance of pageantry from the Mughal Court. The glory of the ruler was expressed in the magnificence of the structural manifestation and the ritual of court-life. The British adopted and further elaborated the rituals and pageantry.

They recognized the influence it had on the psychology of the Indians and used it to affirm their power and superiority and therefore their right to rule. Their success in this direction is best illustrated by Syed Mohammad Latif, Extra Judicial Assistant Commissioner, Gurdaspur, who in the preface to his book on Lahore wrote in 1892 of the 'magic wand of British Civilization' that has transformed India into being 'happy, prosperous, strong and united' and thus 'who can for a moment doubt the greatness of the nation which under the all-wise decree of Providence, is ruling the destinies of this vast empire?' And, further, he advises the youth of India never to 'think under any guise or pretext whatever, of rivalry with your rulers, for that is sure to bring upon you the wrath of God…' and 'to respect your rulers heartily, and look upon the lowest of their rank as your protector and master'.[5] The highest of local rank was to submit to the lowest of alien rank.

5. See the preface to *Lahore: Its History, Architectural Remains and Antiquities*… S.M. Latif, op. cit.

Except for the early period of their stay in India, when the Company officers tried to emulate the local elite in matters of dress and custom, the British, by the beginning of the 19^{th} century, especially with the coming of Wellesley as the Governor General, always made it a point to set themselves apart from the Indian. The cultural differences were highlighted and the Indian way of life was considered inferior and ridiculed. The matter of a superior race ruling over an inferior one was never far from the surface, with an intellectual underpinning provided by the growing biological sciences of the period in Europe.[6]

A public display of culture, quite in contrast with the local, was arranged daily in the Soldiers Garden, set up near the Data Sahib shrine, ostensibly for the entertainment of the troops. It was 'the gathering place of the beauty and the fashion of old Lahore – fair ladies in enormous crinolines, with attendant swains in peg-top trousers and tall hats, wearing beards and whiskers of portentous size, strolling about among the flower beds, listening to the strains of the band.'[7] Entry of the natives in the garden was banned but they could watch from the sidelines the open cavorting of males and females in alien dresses and listen to the music, the whole experience being very different from their own. The effect of this display on the local populace, who were encouraged to line the sides, could only be of awe and submission.

Use of Existing Infrastructure

Following the practice of all conquerors, the British adapted the existing built environment and buildings of Lahore to new uses before setting out to build new structures for their particular use. The buildings so used, modified or adapted by the British, were not only secular in nature, but also often religious structures such

6. William Dalrymple tells of a British father, serving in India and begetting children from native women, sending only his fairer children to England to study to be officers, but not his darker progeny who he left behind in India to find their own future; *White Mughals* Penguin Books 2004, p 51

7. Goulding, H.R., *Old Lahore: Reminiscences of a Resident* (Undated Reprint) Universal Books, Lahore p 2

as mosques and tombs. As the administration of the British became better consolidated, new forms of the built environment were created and the new urban pattern, monuments and public buildings, expressed the changed social realities.

British troops were stationed in the Lahore Fort (called the Citadel in their early reports), and across the Taxali Gate down to the Shrine of Data Sahib, so that the cantonment lay to the West and South West of the city along with a Christian cemetery that still exists there. The barracks along the lower Mall, extending from where the Tollinton Market stands today, to the Punjab Secretariat, earlier used by Sikh troops under General Ventura and other French officers in the pay of Ranjit Singh, were also used to station the British troops. From 1849 to 1852 this area was known as 'Anarkalee Station' with the present day bazaar of New Anarkali called the 'Sudder'.[8]

A house belonging to Raja Dhian Singh, minister of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, situated inside the Taxali Gate of the walled city close to the Fort was 'fitted up as a place of worship'. The tomb of Anarkali built in 1615, a domed structure in brick, was used partly as an office and partly as a residence for some of the clerical staff, temporary rooms being added for the latter round the base of the main building, and later consecrated as a church. The bungalow of the French General Ventura who worked for Ranjit Singh, located west of the barracks was converted into the office of the British Board of Administration. It is still in use as the office of the Chief Secretary of the Government. Just outside the city, on the track to Mian Mir, was the tomb of Qasim Khan, a noble from Akbar's time. A Sikh Sardar, Jamadar Khushal Singh,[9] had used the tomb and its surrounding ancillary buildings but now it was taken over for use

8. Sudder or Saddar: This was the area where the native bazaar came into contact with the cantonment. It was usually a market under the control of the Military for hygienic matters and had native markets for provisions, vegetables etc for daily use. It exists as a periphery of all cantonments, such as Lahore, Rawalpindi, Karachi, Quetta, established by the British.

9. Khan, Muhammad Waliullah, *Governor's House Lahore: A story of the origin, history and development of the Governor's House, Lahore,* Department of Information, etc., Government of Punjab, 1983. According to him the tomb is of Qasim Khan Mir Bahr, Chaman Ara-i-Khusran Ajlah.

as the residence of the Chairman, Board of Administration. It has continued as the residence of the Chief of the province and at present is the Governor's House. Wings were added to the central dome of the tomb to create additional rooms and suites. The mosque of Dai Anga, a brick structure with a highly decorated facade in tiles near the present railway station, was first used as a railway office and later as a residence by Mr. Cope, editor of the *Lahore Chronicle*. He also maintained his press on the same premises. The tomb of Shah Chiragh housed the offices of the Accountant General. Lehna Singh's *Chaoni*, north of the Grand Trunk Road was used as a lunatic asylum. Rang Mahal, part of a house of Nawab Mian Khan was used as Mission School and the *haveli* of Nau Nehal Singh was, and continues to be, used as a girls school. The *haveli* of Raja Suchet Singh was used as the Tehsil Court, and the stables connected to it were used as the Munsiff's Court.

The power of the new rulers to occupy any structure and to put it to any use that they deemed necessary was amply demonstrated; however, new and expanding needs necessitated the building of new structures. The first priority was stationing the army away from the civil population and the construction of railways for troop deployment.

Cantonment 1852 (First Statement of the new Rulers)

The first major construction that the British carried out was the building of a new cantonment. More than just a station for troops, the cantonment was a symbol of the power and uniqueness of the new rulers' culture. This was a new city built in juxtaposition to the old, highlighting the tremendous differences. The Lahore Cantonment is a unique British contribution, as none of the earlier rulers had set themselves so apart from the ruled, and offered such a different lifestyle in terms of urban pattern, quality and style of

houses and shopping. Straight, clean roads, bungalow-style houses and separate shopping precincts, were novel ideas that the local native elite then also sought to emulate. The desire to live like the new rulers gradually seeped to all segments of the native upper classes, culminating in the establishment of Model Town in 1923 'after the image' of the British. The two events, the mid 19th century cantonment and its echo the 20th century Model Town are significant markers in the transformation of the city and thus deserve closer study.

The location, layout and architecture of the cantonment had military origins. By the end of the 18th century, the British evolved a strategy of military campaigns based on mobility and concentrated firepower, as opposed to clashes of masses of army, its center point being the stationing of troops in open and spread-out cantonments, close to, but not within the cities. On the one hand, such an arrangement avoided the offering of a specific target to the enemy and, on the other, ensured the easy mobility of the government troops. Unlike the forts, which were located within the city, these stations were located at a distance of four to seven miles from the city. This was the logical strategy of a small force, with a superior firepower, against an enemy that relied on numbers of massed infantry.

The British also knew that their real enemy, in the long run, was the local population. So the strategy was to keep the Indian cities unarmed and indefensible and to keep the British forces distant from the local populace, dispersed in cantonments and ever ready. The distance from the natives was more than physical. It was deliberately extended to the social and political spheres. All intermixing was discouraged; the army was very deliberately imbued with a value system as being an entity superior to the civilians, with an inbuilt contempt for the natives and everything native. An

intervening physical barrier, such as a canal, railway line or native troop barracks, separated the British areas from the native quarters. Such a barrier usually also had the elevation to act as a vantage point to monitor any movement from the city towards the Cantonment.

The City of Lahore was disarmed. Except for the citadel, which was occupied by the British troops, all other defense systems of the city were literally destroyed. The wall surrounding the City was pulled down.[10] In the process a number of houses, which had been built close to the wall, were also affected. The occupants were compensated to a degree, but the demolition was complete. In fact they were offered a choice of new sites in any of the government-owned land in the city. The total compensation paid out was Rs 2790,[11] not a small amount in those days. Some houses had roofs resting on the wall. These were also pulled down. The Military was confined to 'the Citadel, the Hazuri Bagh, the Masjid Square and the partly open space that lies on the town sides of these'. The moat outside the wall was filled up and a circular garden was laid out and the cost of creating the garden and its maintenance was passed on to the members of the Municipality.[12] Three gates, 'Lahoree, Shahalamee & Delhi' were demolished and rebuilt. Essentially they were widened to allow play of artillery if needed.

The city having been disarmed, the building of the cantonment was taken in hand. A marble slab with the inscription, 'This was erected to mark the spot where Lord Napier[13] laid out the Cantonment of Meean Mir', was placed at the spot to mark the central point of the Cantonment. An area of more than 35 square

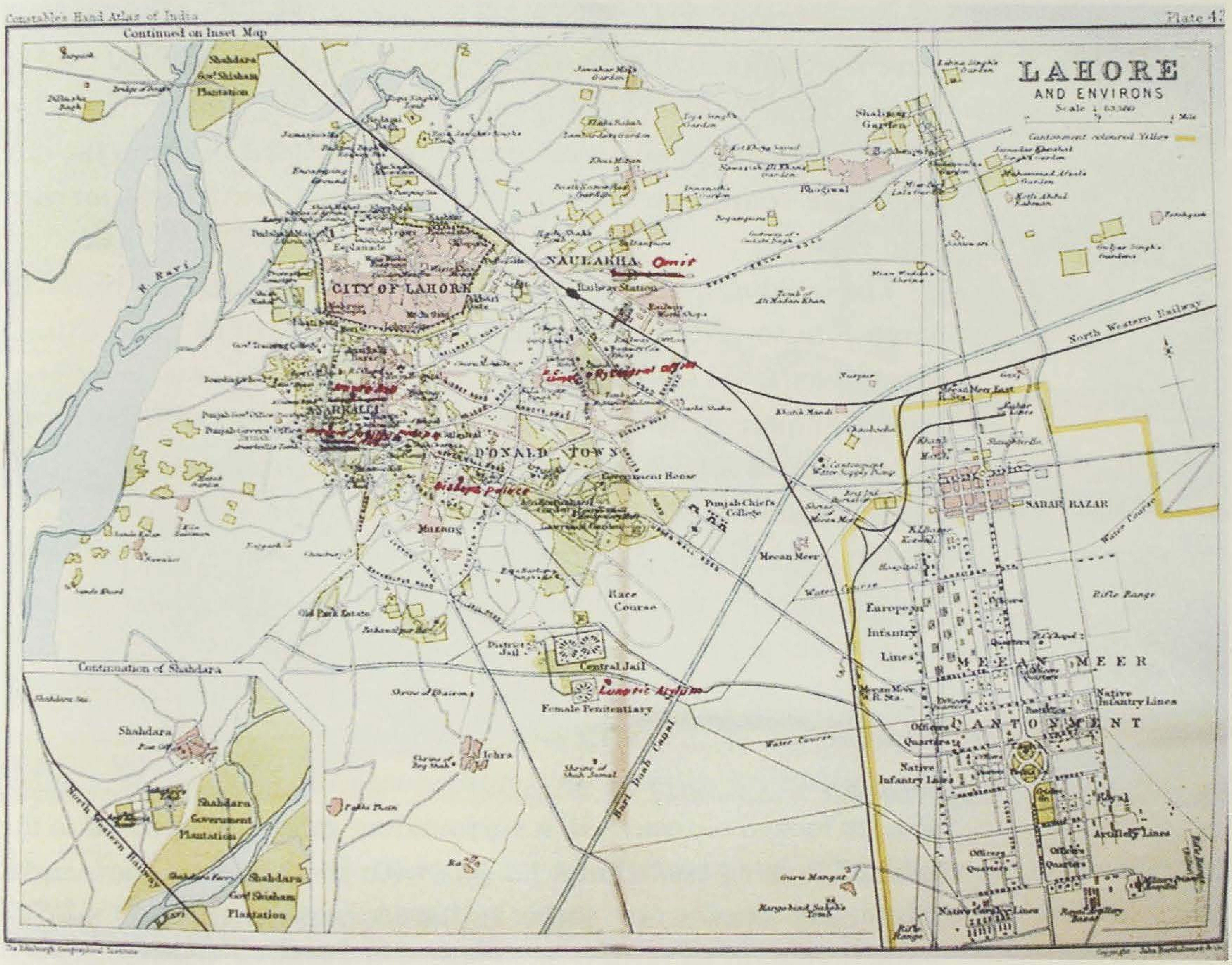
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10. A note in file No. 58-9, Punjab Archives, dated 23rd February 1852 provides interesting reading about the manner and difficulties faced in the process.

11. Letter from Secretary to Govt. of India to Board of Administration (BOA), the Punjab, dated 11 June, 1852.

12. *City of Lahore 1867, the Punjab Archives*, shows the division of the moat into parts, generally from one gate to another with each allocated to a prominent citizen, whose duty it was to lay out a garden and maintain it. Prominent among them were Faqeer Shamsuddin, Ghulam Mahboob Subhani, Lala Rutten Chand, Dr. Ajooda Nath.

13. Napier of Magdala and Caryngton, First Baron, was at the time Lt Col. Chief Engineer to the Chief Commissioner. The tablet is presently located in a small green patch opposite the church of St Mary Magdalene. It was originally at the center of the adjoining square.



14

Lahore, circa 1893: The city of Lahore was given a dual identity, civil and military, with the establishment of the Cantonment at a distance from the city with the canal and the railway dividing the two; the schizophrenic outcome was further emphasized by the differences in urban pattern. The map shows the railway line cutting through the royal tomb complex of Jahangir. Asif Jah, and NoorJahan (bottom-left inset) but covers the deed by ignoring the existence of the tomb of NoorJahan.

kilometers was taken over and the various facilities were constructed over a period of time. This makes interesting comparison with the City. The Walled City including the fort has an area of 2.5 square kilometers with a then estimated population of about 100,000. The Cantonment, including the civilian camp-followers in Saddar, was about 12,000. Occupation of space, its location, elevation and size was the most eloquent symbol of the power, authority and status of those in possession.

The cantonment in Lahore was laid out in a gridiron pattern along a North-South axis. East-West roads were linked to the civil station of Anarkali on the West, while the main North-South line



16

Residential accommodations for the middle level military officers, semi-detached and row houses, with independent kitchen and toilet facilities, deep verandas, high ceilings to cater for the local climate.

Bungalows for officers were designed according to the standard Military Engineering Services Handbook, and consisted of rooms grouped together, surrounded by a deep veranda, set amidst large plots of land. The detached kitchens were linked to the main house by a covered corridor. Bathrooms were attached to some of the rooms with water being supplied through hand pumps or a well on the site. The *Bahishti* (water carrier) ensured the ready supply of water for bathing and toilet needs. A soakage pit (septic tank) was built at the rear of the house to cater for the sewage/waste water of the house. Servants quarters were built at the rear of the plot of land to complete the overall complex. Stables, *Dhobi Ghat* (Clothes washing and drying area), carriage storage, were also towards the rear of the building. When two or more houses stood back to back a veritable small native village came into being.



17

Typical bungalow for the officers, free standing in large lot of land with a bevy of servants from water-carriers to stable-boys, good flooring and healthy environs, deep verandas, high ceilings.

At the Northern end of the cantonment, areas were set aside for housing the native support staff of the army, and for shops selling daily provisions such as meat, vegetables, *ghee* (cooking butter), poultry and fruit, as well as small repair workshops for carriages, furniture and later motor cars. In this area the servants employed by the 'Sahibs' did their shopping and the natives ran the shops. This area, called the Saddar Bazaar, was a common feature of almost all cantonments in India. The houses in exposed brickwork were, however, built in the native style, as opposed to the bungalows. The main door and sitting room (*Baithak*) opened directly onto the main street, while the other rooms opened onto the courtyard. The streets, with drains running alongside them, were straight and broad and contrasted with those of old Lahore. The shops were small with the shopping method of the walled city, that is, the customer stood in

the street and asked for whatever he wanted. The only exceptions were the shops for cloth, shoes and *hakims* (local doctors). The spatial interaction and the social relationship between the customer and the shopkeeper in the Saddar were entirely different from the shopping reserved for the officers in the center of the Cantonment.

A higher class of shops, bigger, cleaner, with merchandise displayed in neat rows of showcases, and specifically intended for the officers, was located near the center of the Cantonment. In this reserved shopping center the goods were purchased directly by the sahibs or the mem-sahibs, albeit with the help of native servants. The shops, generally agencies of European manufacturers, were mostly run by Europeans or their most trusted allies such as the Zoroastrians (wrongly called Parsees) or Anglo-Indians. The wide variety of goods and services offered included, wines and spirits, furniture (for sale and for hire), tailors, bakeries, carriage hire, sales and repairs, imported personal goods such as tobacco, perfumes, silks, souvenirs, sporting arms and ammunition and other commodities. Particularly popular items were souvenirs of all kinds to be presented at the numerous galas and functions that were held. The customers chose the products and goods and these were delivered to the homes. The Sahibs and Mem-Sahibs could not be seen to be carrying anything. On the eastern periphery of the Cantonment were located the dairy farm, cattle-yards, regimental stables and veterinary facilities. The fields for growing fodder extended eastwards onto the agricultural lands of neighboring villages. Regimental parade grounds, shooting-ranges and training fields occupied much of the southern areas of the Cantonment.

To the native civilian of Lahore, the Cantonment area, its streets and buildings, its wide roads, footpaths, white-washed kerbs, was a world apart, an area that he could only enter with a feeling of awe and discomfort, because of the unfamiliar surroundings. To the city

dwellers in Pakistan and indeed all India the word cantonment conjures up a vision of clean, wide and tree-lined streets, quite different from the ill-maintained by-lanes of their *mohallas*. The senior citizens of today would also remember that before Independence the cantonment was an area that you did not go to casually. Though not explicitly forbidden, it was definitely discouraged. It was an area for the armed forces with some 'camp-follower' civilians. The cantonment, more than anything else, represented the power and cultural hegemony of the British. The British occupation had deep and lasting repercussions on the city of Lahore. The effect on the city was not only restricted to the change in urban pattern; the life - style, clothing, food habits in short the entire cultural ethos, underwent a change.

Railways

Railways, introduced by the British, contrasted with the bullock cart, and sharply focused on the great difference between the old and new modes of transport. The Railway captured the imagination of the Indian public and its various elements, the tracks, engine, whistle, etc., became part of the lore and landscape of the areas through which it ran. The railway station, the road to the city, 'Railway Road', spawned an ambience of its own, with coolies, *rehriwalas* (vendors with carts), and food stalls and restaurants which became meeting places for a quick and cheap cup of tea. The vast distances of India became manageable, setting off new waves of travelers and pilgrims making their way across the subcontinent. The railways of course also served the primary military purpose of the quick dispatch of troops and ordinance to any trouble spot.

Railways also spawned the new construction of railway stations and housing colonies, most notably the one for senior officers called the Mayo Gardens. Most followed the standard designs prepared by

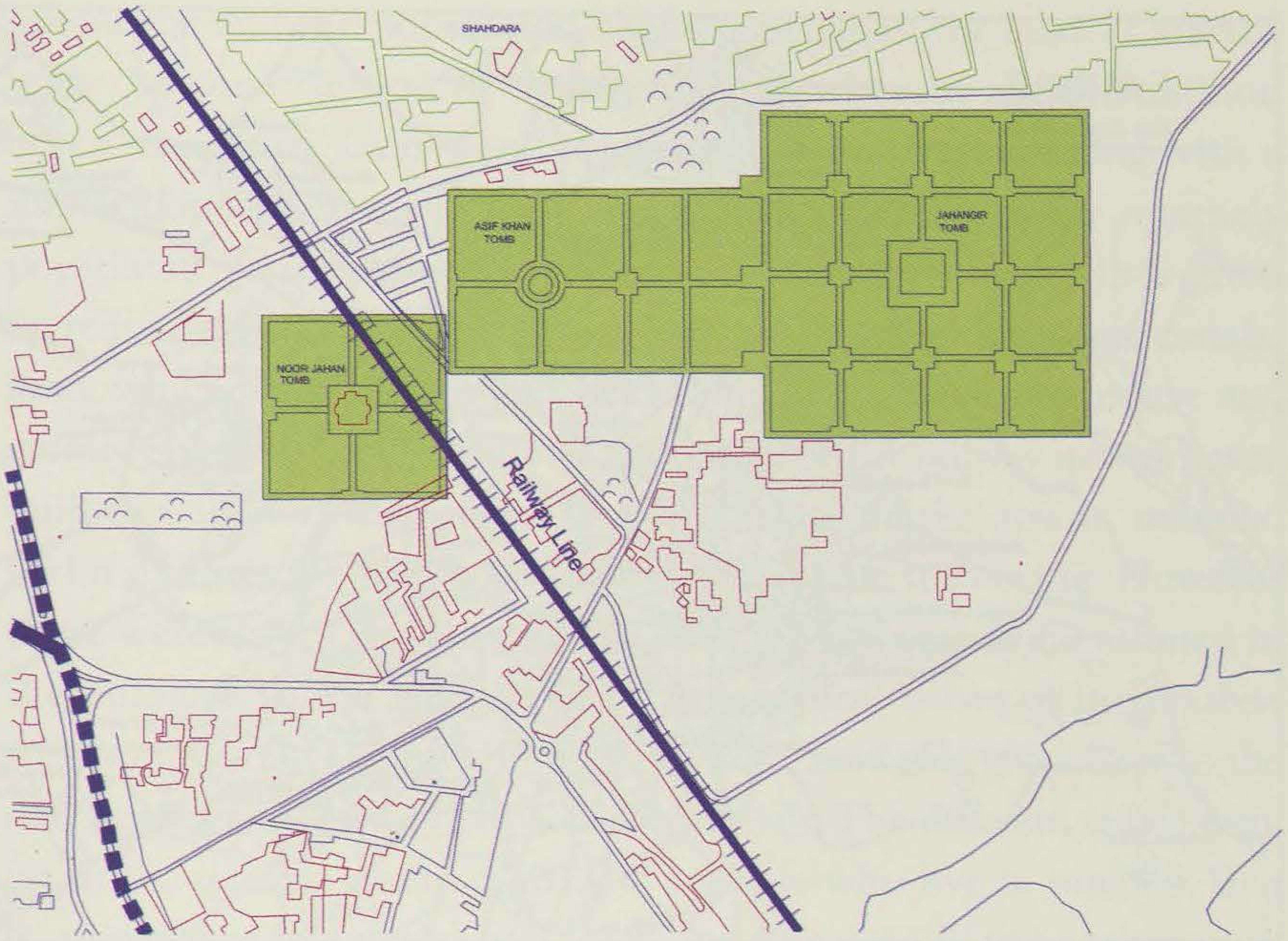
the Railway engineers. Colonies were generally with straight wide roads with bungalows sited in large lots. Even entertainment facilities, such as the Burt Institute and Griffin Institute in Lahore, were buildings with sparse decoration, but in terms of usage for dance and music, something novel for the public. Social evenings in these were restricted to members but invariably had a crowd of on-lookers gazing from behind the hedges.

The foundation stone of the Railway Station in Lahore was laid in 1859, and the first train service was inaugurated in 1861. The railway station is a brick structure designed to be a defendable fort. It has turrets with castellated parapets and a galley linking its two towers. The streets, connecting the station to the city, converge in a radial manner with a vast open space between the station and the nearest building toward the city. Thus the structure and the street layout express the military importance of the location. The main entrance and the waiting area was reserved for the first class passengers and British officers, while separate entrances, waiting halls of decidedly inferior standard, were provided for the natives who generally traveled in the third class.

The line from Delhi was extended to Lahore and approached the city from the North-East, and stopping at the station near the Delhi gate, it moved on to Peshawar across a bridge on the river Ravi. On the way to Peshawar the line crossed the Ravi north of Lahore and, tragically, right through the elaborate royal tomb complex[14] of the Mughals, west of the river. This was an act of total disdain for the local heritage and culture. This North Western system, as it came to be called, was the major carrier of British influence to the North Western frontiers of British India.

The south line ran from Lahore Station to Multan, between Civil and Military areas, thus providing an additional barrier between the

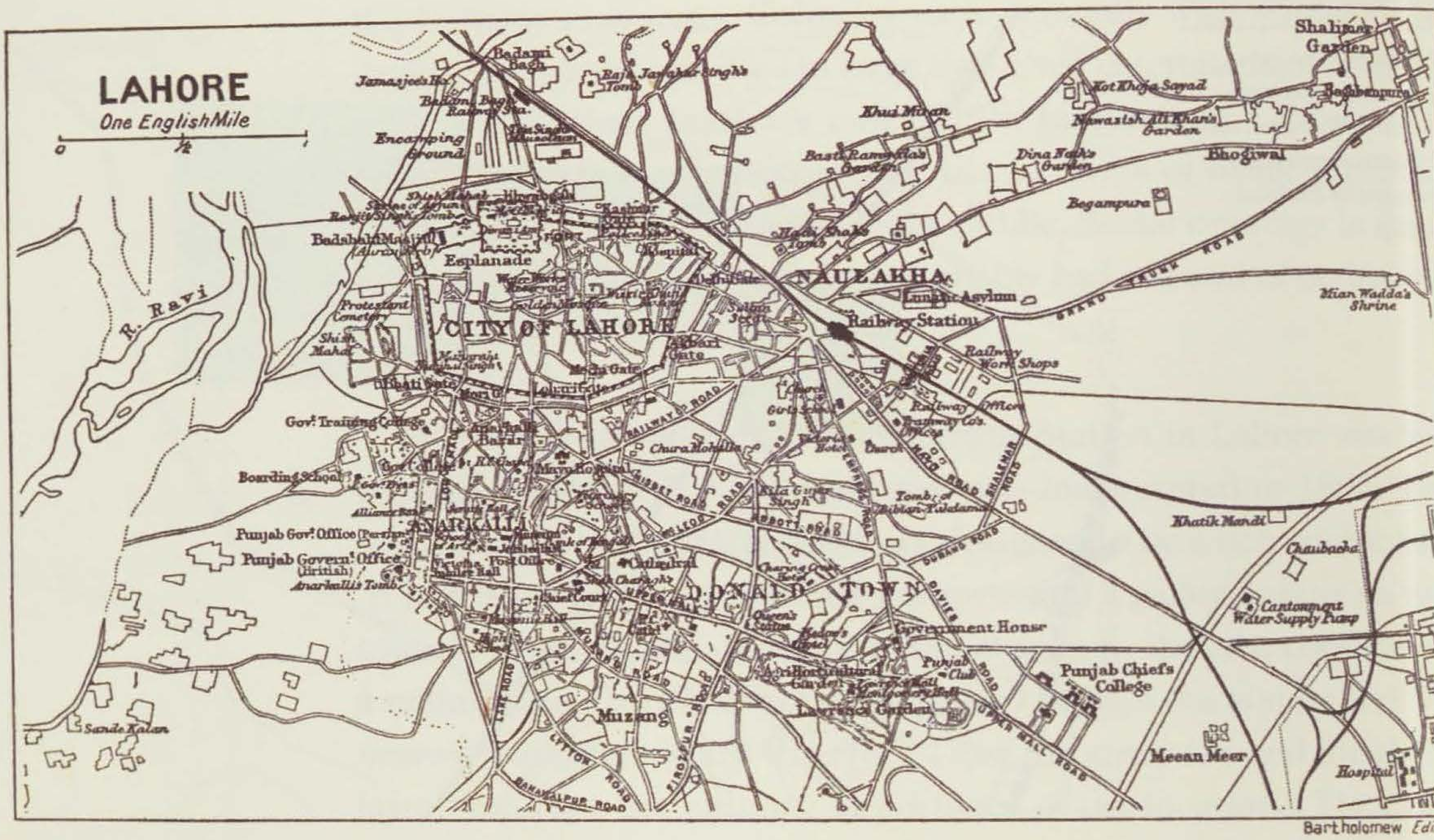
14. This is the complex of tombs of Emperor Jahangir, Noor Jehan and Asif Jah.



18

The Railway line cut through the royal tomb complex at Shahdara, north of Lahore, in complete disregard for the local heritage.

city and the cantonment. Lahore later became a major center of the North Western Railways with the establishment of railway workshops in 1874. These workshops were an extensive complex housing repair and maintenance facilities. The railway workshops acquired a special place in the culture of the city. At the time, they were the largest industrial establishment, providing employment to the people of Lahore and beyond. A special train ran in the morning and evening to bring in the skilled labour force from as far away as Sialkot. In popular parlance it was called the *Baboo* train, for it brought labour and petty officials for the railway establishment. These workshops also gave birth to the first school of engineering to train middle level technicians for the maintenance of the railways. This was called the Maclagan School (after the Lt Governor of the Punjab of the time) and later the College of Engineering, and focused on the electrical and mechanical branches, most needed for the maintenance of the machinery. Today it is the University of Engineering and Technology Lahore.



19

Lahore, 1912: The colonial civil station, called the Donald Town, grew rapidly in late nineteenth and early twentieth century to form a link between the native city of Lahore and the military cantonment. The urban pattern strongly reflected the labyrinthine street pattern of the native city; however the architecture assimilated European building features.

The railway track inhibited the growth of the city to the North and towards the cantonment because of the high cost of developing links across railway tracks such as under passes or overhead bridges. The northern areas of Lahore, along the Grand Trunk Road, which at one time housed the elite of the town in the old suburbs of Begumpura, Baghbanpura and Mughalpura, were reduced to second class neighborhoods and the new upper class areas were located on the South and South West.

Donald Town (Civil Lines)

The great upheaval of 1857 transformed Company rule to the Raj with Victoria as the Empress of India. The British were now able to concentrate on the consolidation of their rule in the Punjab and began a series of civil engineering programs which were to change the Punjab forever. The most fundamental was a change in the

landscape and the population characteristics of the land. It started with the construction of canal colonies, whereby about 5 million acres of pasture land was brought under cultivation along with a major population shift from the Eastern Punjab to the sparsely populated *doabas*, land between two rivers, resulting in a great increase of wealth and social restructuring. Through irrigation canals, land, which for centuries had yielded little, was made productive and greatly enhanced the income of the peasantry. A railway network was built to transport the agricultural produce to market towns, *mandis*, and a prosperous urban class of traders came into being. However there were losers in this process also, who are rarely mentioned in the eulogies to the British Raj. The pastoral tribes of the *doabas* were deprived of their livelihood and their land was given over to the new settlers from other parts of the Punjab. The different tribes were given the generic name of *janglis* (people who live in jungles, that is, uncivilized or savage) and their land was seen fit to be taken over. The pastures of these tribes being greatly reduced, they turned to thievery and cattle lifting; then followed their social and almost physical elimination. To the new settlers though, it brought an era of prosperity they had not known before. The government coffers were filled with the increase in revenue that then financed the large civil construction program being carried out.

As in the cantonment, on the civil side also, architecture was the domain of engineer-turned-architects, or later some architect who came out to work in the colonies for a short tenure, such as John Begg and others. The architectural style followed the dictate of the Public Works Member of the Viceroy's Council[15] wherein a European style was to be followed for buildings used by the Europeans, and any Muslim (Indo-Saracenic) or Hindu stylistic interpretation, for buildings meant for the natives. One of the earliest constructions meant for civil use was the Lawrence Hall (1861) built to honor John Lawrence, designed by Mr G Stone, C E[16] in European Classic

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15. See previous Chapter *"The British in India"* ref number 38

16. Latif, SM p 309



20

Montgomery Hall: The Lawrence Gardens and the two Halls, Lawrence (built 1861) and Montgomery (built 1866), commemorated the founders of the British rule in the Punjab. Quite consciously, they were built in a 'pure' European style.



21

Tollinton Market (restored 2005): The Exhibition Building (later the Tollinton Market) was built in 1864, by Railway engineers, in three months, in a utilitarian style as dictated by the railway hand-books for building with brick walls and iron trusses.



22

Lahore General Post Office (GPO) built c1900, incorporated European stone architecture in brick. The deep verandahs, prominent cornices, and balustrades give play to color, light and shade, unique to the strong sun, and cloudless sky of Lahore.

Style set in the plains of Lahore. Nothing could contrast more with native building styles.

Later, in 1866, another hall was added to honor Governor Montgomery, designed by J. Gordon, C E[17] A building meant for the Punjab Club, restricted to Europeans, was constructed in a similar style. The industrial exhibition building that was later converted into Tollinton Market, was erected in three months, in 1864, by railway engineers using iron trusses, and verandas on the lines of standard railway buildings. Churches featured European Ecclesiastical architecture as in the case of the Church in the Cantonment and later, the Anglican and Roman Catholic cathedrals on the Mall.

The architecture of the early public buildings meant for use by the natives followed the general lines of the Indo-Saracenic Style, which took shape under the influence of British tutelage. The High Court, Town Hall, General Post Office (GPO) were structures to

17. ibid p 309. Gordon who came to have the reputation of an expert of the Grecian Style was later called upon by the Viceroy to submit a design for the Mayo College at Ajmer.



23

Town Hall built 1890: the central tall pointed-arch, flanked by horse-shoe arches and topped by incongruous cupolas make a less than successful attempt to incorporate Indian elements in a European composition.

house newly instituted functions which the native population had not been familiar with. These followed the patterns set by the British in other parts of India of planning of rooms around a courtyard with verandas to provide protection from the sun. The surface decoration incorporated some native features or their European versions, as developed in the hands of European architects. The attempts sometimes succeeded rather well, as in the case of the General Post Office and less so, as in the case of the Town Hall. Communication was improved with the introduction of a regular post and then telephone and telegraph; the infrastructure of piped water supply and drainage was provided, and buildings to accommodate offices and courts for the judiciary, and the secretariat for the civil administration, were built.

Urban Pattern

A new urban pattern evolved for the civilian part of the city, which

was neither the native labyrinthine nor the gridiron of the cantonment; it comprised roads that wove through or around the existing structures, mosques and tombs, interlinking the centers of power and logistical nodes, that is, the Office of the Board of Administration or the Secretariat, Governor's House, Cantonment, or Railway Station, in the most direct manner available. However, wherever possible, existing tracks and rights-of-way were respected, broadened, lined with trees and turned into paved roads.

The track linking the Anarkali and Fort stations became an important road and was named the Mall, and later called the Lower Mall. The importance of this road was greater during the early British Period, when a major part of the government and the garrison was based around the fort and Circular Road. Most of the existing structures along this road were taken over for use by the new administration. In the wake of the British, local merchants and shopkeepers set up their establishments near the Anarkali Station. Some of the earliest houses/ bungalows built by British civilian traders, who invariably followed the British troops, were constructed along this road. When the troops were moved from this rather congested station to the new cantonment in 1852, the whole area was put to civilian use. The Lower Mall or the original Mall linked the government offices with the fort and the walled city.

Empress Road linked the Governor's House with the Railway Station. During the Raj period the railway was a vital link, as well as a symbol of authority of the ruling power. All important dignitaries came by rail and were driven along the Empress Road to the Governor's House, or their other abodes. The road thus witnessed the comings and goings of the most important persons and was, therefore, decorated on the two sides with important appendages of the Raj, such as churches, missions, railway offices, the leading local Nawab, police lines and civilian resident Britishers, mainly

shopkeepers and retirees. The length made for an easy straight ride in a horse carriage, with the populace lining the street on important occasions.

The Mall (originally called Lawrence Road, and later, the Upper Mall) linked the Government Secretariat with the cantonment, and it was first aligned by Lt-Colonel Napier the civil engineer.[18] Along this road were also located the Governor's House, Aitchison College, Government Gazetted Officers Residences, the Punjab Club, the Zoo and other such paraphernalia of the Raj. The end closer to the city later became the main shopping area for the British and upper classes. Mayo Road linked the civil railway station with the cantonment. The road neatly by-passed all the major residential settlements of the time and provided a direct link to the cantonment for ease of the traveling soldiers and equipment. The cantonment itself was large enough to merit two railway stations of its own, North and South. McLeod Road linked the railway station with the government offices, skirting the localities that had grown outside the walled city, such as Gawalmandi. In particular it went around the tomb of Musa Ahangar to avoid any damage to that old monument showing the sensitivity of some civil officer towards local culture.

The roads linking Lahore with other cities were also integrated into the new network and included the Grand Trunk Road that linked Calcutta with Peshawar. In its original alignment it turned south-east from the Delhi Gate following what is today the road to Harike. When that area was taken up by the Cantonment the G.T. Road alignment was changed to follow a track that cut through the Shalamar Garden complex.

The Ferozepur Road, after passing through the settlements of Ichra, Mozang and Purani Anarkali, entered Lahore at Lohari Gate. The Multan Road heading South, all the way to Karachi, passed by

18. Goulding, H.R. op cit p 30



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The Governor's House, the Lawrence Gardens, the Punjab Club and the GOR formed a large green area wherein were located residential and recreational facilities for the top British administrators. This contrasted rather sharply with the congested native city.

the famous Chauburji Gardens to join up with Lower Mall. Private residences along these roads were built incorporating some existing structure such as a tomb, as a central hall or, in a garden, an outdoor pavilion. 'The house in which I live is one of the few beneath which none lie buried.... every self respecting resident of Lahore has a tomb in his garden.... and a tomb would make such a pleasant summer house.'[19] A major change in the style of housing came with the Government Officers Residences (GOR Colony) on the Upper Mall. The layout was a departure from the gridiron pattern of the cantonment and railway housing of Mayo Gardens. Here the rigid disciplines imposed by the railway and military engineers was cast aside and the street pattern follows smooth curvilinear lines with houses set back from the road. The meandering roads lined by green hedges as boundaries between houses gave a relaxed ambience. The same spirit was carried over to the gardens, then called the Lawrence Gardens, with smooth flowing meandering walkways. Adjacent to

19. Stratton, Alfred William, *Letters From India* first published 1908, reprint 1977, Al Biruni, Lahore p 72

the Lawrence Gardens was the zoo and botanical gardens, making the whole precinct one large park for the relaxation of the upper classes. The Government House and the Punjab Club completed the composition as a bastion of power expressed through the built environment.

A housing colony for the native government servants, comprising small, two to three-room houses, was located on the Multan Road on a gridiron of streets near the four minars of the surviving gardens called the Chauburji, and thus the society came to be called the Chauburji Quarters. These were obviously for the lesser people as seen in the bare and utilitarian facilities provided to them. Thus a pattern was set for postcolonial governments to follow. Larger luxurious houses for the senior employees who took the place of the departing British and small two to three room quarters for juniors, and thus were born the GOR II and Wahadat Colony on Ferozepur Road.

The population of the city grew at an ever-increasing rate and soon the city began to grow beyond the old city wall and crossed the Circular Road into areas which were, in essence, an extension of the respective roads passing through the city gates. Thus outside the Delhi Gate was located the Sultan ki Sarai, and the housing around it with its now popular Landa Bazaar, and coming down the Circular Road, there developed the Ram Galis, Gowalmandi, Mela Ram and other small streets. None of these areas were totally vacant or empty and each took its name from some existing feature for example Gowalmandi (Market place of the Milk sellers)

New neighborhoods, incorporating the British-introduced services of piped water, were built. The pipes and drainage being more efficient if laid in straight lines led to the abandonment of the labyrinthine pattern of streets and the adoption of the gridiron

pattern, also reflecting the cantonment layout of the military. The streets were then made wide enough to allow carriages to use them. The layout of the area, derived from the needs of the new services, again followed the example of the cantonment (the housing of the new rulers), and thus emerged into a gridiron pattern that was adjusted to some given constraints such as an historical feature, tomb or mosque. The streets were mainly brick-paved with drains on both sides. The houses in these new areas, however, followed traditional lines. Closely packed brick-faced houses continued to be built with internal courtyards and balconies towards the streets. Architectural elements of openings, shading devices and brick motifs continued to carry the traditional idiom and style. The ground floor rooms were sometimes converted into shops, which supplied provisions to the neighborhood. The streetscape had a harmony born out of respect of one building for the other, in terms of height and external treatment. Balconies though varied in design and columns even of Greek or some hybrid origin, created the varied yet unified street frontage. This is best exemplified in areas such as Krishan Nagar, and later Mohammad Nagar, showing the developments in the traditional native housing set in a new urban pattern.

Model Town : The Local Elite Adopt the Rulers' Style - 1913

One of the lasting effects of the Raj in Lahore is the unique effort by a native to set up a residential colony based on the western concept of the garden city. It illustrates, more than any other, the colonial impact on the life style of the natives. It also shows the all-pervasive role of the colonial bureaucracy, and the subtle efforts to derail such examples of native creativity and ingenuity.

The brainchild of one Dewan Khem Chand,[20] a student of law,

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20. Not much is known of Dewan Khem Chand and his family who were perhaps all driven to India during the calamitous riots of 1947. It can, however, be deduced from his writings that he was born in 1887, to a lawyer Dewan Tek Chand who went on to become a judge of the Chief Court (as the High Court was then known). He was evidently a successful lawyer as he sent his son to England to pursue his studies for the Bar in 1909. Khem Chand claims he got the idea for setting up an ideal town at the age of fourteen.

it gave expression to the desire of the native elite to live in bungalows as the British, with an urban plan based on the ideals of city layout as discussed in debates in England at the end of the 19th century. Model Town, Lahore, illustrates very clearly how British ideas were transferred to the colonies and how in the replanting process, the graft, brought forth a fruit similar, yet different, with a flavor and character all its own.

Khem Chand returned to Lahore to create the quaint suburb called Model Town on the road to Kasur and Ferozepur, six miles from the center of the city. It is the only part of Lahore, which has a romance-laden geometric regularity that sets it apart from the harsh rectilinear pattern of the cantonment and the labyrinthine street pattern of the Walled City. It is a disciplined flight of imagination that is the dream of architects and town planners.

The most distinctive feature of this town is the geometric street pattern, and it is also the only suburb of its time, which was planned as a self-contained town, with its own recreational and service areas. The town is essentially a square divided into eight parts, with a great circle in the center. The eight parts are blocks ranging from A to H. Blocks, J and K, not part of the original scheme, were added after 1930. All the eight parts are identical and the plot numbering is the same for each block, making it relatively easy for a newcomer to find an address. Open spaces, green parks and play areas are generously provided, giving a spacious look and a leafy environment.

However, the Town has forgotten the man who had the courage to dream and the tenacity to implement it. There is no street; no square or even a plaque that pays homage to the genius who brought it all about.

The living conditions in the cities of Britain during the nineteenth

century were bad, especially for the working classes. With the Industrial Revolution and without any legislation to guide the mushroom growth of cities, huge areas had been brought under housing. There was little regard for the welfare of the inhabitants; congestion and crime were rife. By the middle of the nineteenth century, this spread began to affect the middle and upper class housing also, and only then did the improvement of the cities begin to be seriously discussed. Organized living, in well-planned towns, away from the crowded and unhygienic industrial cities, had begun to gain currency in England with the publication of a booklet called 'To-morrow', written by Mr. Ebenezer Howard in 1898. Mr. Howard advocated preparation of 'town plans' on a rational basis, before the building of a town, and preferably away from crowded cities. He called it the Garden City. In a short while his ideas gained acceptance and a Garden City Association was formed in 1899, and in 1903, an estate of 3,800 acres was purchased to build the ideal city. It was a fashionable and lively topic among the intellectuals of the industrialized countries, with Germany taking the lead in developing detailed plans. The planning of new towns and the improvement of old ones became a recurrent theme in the press and among architects and public health engineers. The art of Town Planning came into its own.

Khem Chand's stay in Britain, at a time when these discussions were actively taking place, helped him to clarify his thoughts and articulate his scheme. The principles of co-operative movement and co-operative living, and later, the impact of Fabian Socialism, are also evident in his thinking. On his return to Lahore, he worked on his vision with a missionary spirit. His first choice was to set up his ideal town in Shahdara, West of Lahore, across the river Ravi. He began negotiations for the purchase of 1,000 acres along the Grand Trunk Road, from Seth Sakhi Shah. However, Rai Bahadur W.C. Chopra, Executive Engineer of Gujranwala Division, dissuaded

him, as the land in question was subject to flooding. Chopra suggested that he take a look at Rakh Kot Lakhpat. Khem Chand went to see the proposed site, accompanied by Sir Ganga Ram, the famous engineer and philanthropist, and he says: 'When I saw it (the site) I literally fell in love with it.'

It was in November 1919, that Dewan Khem Chand published his scheme for the 'Ideal Suburban Town of Lahore'. It was to be a town where 'each house would be detached from the others and would be built Bungalow-like with some garden around it.' His aim was to meet the demands of 'middle class men whose incomes are fixed and limited and who by their better training, education and social position desire to live a better life.'

In 1919 this usually meant the middle-level rungs of British-trained and educated bureaucracy and professionals such as lawyers, doctors and engineers. Essentially the scheme was an expression of the desire of this class to have houses similar to the housing of the British Officers who lived in the Cantonment and the civil lines. 'It is to meet their demands,' Khem Chand continues, 'that I put forward, in brief, the following scheme to found a small suburban town in the vicinity of Lahore, which would provide cheaper, cleaner and more comfortable houses. This town will be built on modern lines with all and many more conveniences and facilities than are now available in Lahore; and its inhabitants will live better, healthier, happier and longer lives.' His idealism and optimism is infectious.

His scheme, as first published, called for the purchase of 1,000 acres of agricultural land within easy reach, within six to seven miles of Lahore, and to build there a town with all the conveniences of modern times. The town would have about 1,000 houses with a population of about 5,000. Khem Chand proposed three categories of houses, A class with plots of four kanals, B class with plots of

two and a half kanals and C class with an area of one and a half kanals per house. As he writes in the report published in 1930, 'the majority of members have more than moderate means' and they demanded bigger plots. Hence, the area for each plot was increased to six kanals for A, four kanals for B and two kanals for C class. The town was to have the facilities of water supply, sewerage and electricity. In the heady days of 1919, according to Khem Chand, 'electricity will be used not only for lighting and fans but, being cheap, it could be used for various other purposes i.e. cooking, heating, dusting of carpets and furniture, cleaning and polishing of boots etc. The use of electricity will do away with dirt, dust, coal and smoke nuisance. Electric clocks could also be provided which would be controlled and regulated from a central office.'

If only Khem Chand were here today to face the electricity bills and the dust and dirt of the summer months in Lahore! Khem Chand's thinking was utopian. He wished to do away with shops and provide a co-operative store, dairy farm, poultry, fruit orchards, laundry and nursery to look after children. 'I pity the poor mother who has to look after three to four small children, has to cook the food and do other household work... The result is that the children are left to themselves. They play about in the streets and in the gutters, they learn dirty and undesirable habits...'

He goes on to say, 'My idea is that up to the age of one year, the child should remain with the mother and thereafter up to the age of six, he should be taken every morning to the nursery and brought back in the evening... Thus the children will be brought up in a much healthier and better way than they could be in ordinary homes.' The sight of the ayahs and governesses carrying the English babies to parks and the nursery in British homes must have deeply affected our Mr. Khem Chand. Khem Chand's ideas on education were a mixture of the progressive and the regressive. For boys he

wanted 'an up-to-date and well-equipped' school where they would 'not be taught by classes but by subjects'. By classes he probably means years. After examinations, the boys would be promoted to the next grade in a particular subject and in this way 'the boys will make much and rapid progress in those subjects in which they take interest and for which they have natural tendencies.' But Khem Chand scoffs at the idea of similar education being provided to girls. 'This kind of education is of little use to them when they get married and have to set up a house of their own'. Girls should be taught all that is necessary to make them good housewives, with senior girls working in the proposed nursery. 'By such training,' he says 'the girls, when they get married and have to rear their own children, will not face any difficulty.' Khem Chand a visionary in most respects, however, saw no other role for women.

His ideas regarding security were also illuminating: instead of uselessly walking around on foot, unable to catch swift thieves, Khem Chand suggested providing bicycles to his watchmen or chowkidars. Even better, he wanted his chowkidars to have electric scooters! 'I am devising a system of automatic alarms so that whenever a door or a window is forced open, all the electric lights in the house will light up and a bell will start ringing.' His inventive spirit was unbounded.

To launch the scheme, Khem Chand looked for a commitment from two hundred buyers. He then planned to call a meeting of those gentlemen in Lahore who would constitute the body for the registration of the company. Khem Chand's scheme was generally well received and he soon had a commitment from two hundred persons. He was delighted that 'the ladies and gentlemen who have agreed to buy houses are all educated and in every way desirable persons. The fact that no less than twenty-six engineers have approved the scheme... have promised to give help and assistance...

makes me very sanguine of the success of my scheme.'

Khem Chand was a persistent fighter. He propagated his scheme of 1,000 plots with all the marketing techniques at his disposal. He spoke at length to any who would meet him, in his particular community and at the lawyers chambers. He was also able to convert British Officialdom to his cause. He was able to win the support of Mr. H. Calvert, Registrar, Joint Stock Companies, who was sufficiently supportive to send the scheme with favourable comments to Sir Edward Maclagan, then the Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab. To lend a helping hand, the Government constituted a committee with Sir H. J. Maynard, the Financial Commissioner as Chairman, Mr. B. T. Gibson the Finance Secretary, Mr. Calvert, Dewan Amar Nath Nanda, Sanitary Engineer to the Punjab Government, F. F. Francis, Consulting Architect to the Punjab Government, Sir Ganga Ram and Dewan Khem Chand, as members to examine the scheme.

The Committee met on 16 November, 1920 and approved the general idea and suggested a few modifications, which Khem Chand adopted. By the end of 1920, the total number of houses ordered was 410 and he called a General Meeting on 27 February, 1921. The meeting was held in the Town Hall at Lahore at twelve noon and was attended by about two hundred Founder Members with Sir Ganga Ram in the chair. The meeting resolved to approve his original scheme and a Preliminary Committee, comprising twenty-one members was set up to frame the bye-laws and take care of other necessary work in connection with the formation of the Society. The meeting also appointed Khem Chand as the Secretary of the Society. Raja Narendra Nath was the first President, a position he enjoyed for the first seven years.

The land that Khem Chand chose, that is, Rakh Kot Lakhpat belonged to the Forest Department. The Rakh was a small forest

spread over 2,000 acres comprising Sheesham trees and the Forest Department viewed it as a valuable asset. In spite of the backing of the Government, it took nearly two years to acquire the land. Khem Chand's original scheme called for only 1,000 acres, but the forest Department insisted that the society purchase the entire area, comprising 1,963 acres. This resulted in an unforeseen heavy investment of nine lakh rupees and this upset the financial side of the scheme. In any case, the ever-optimistic Khem Chand saw it as a useful investment, which would grow in value as the town took shape.

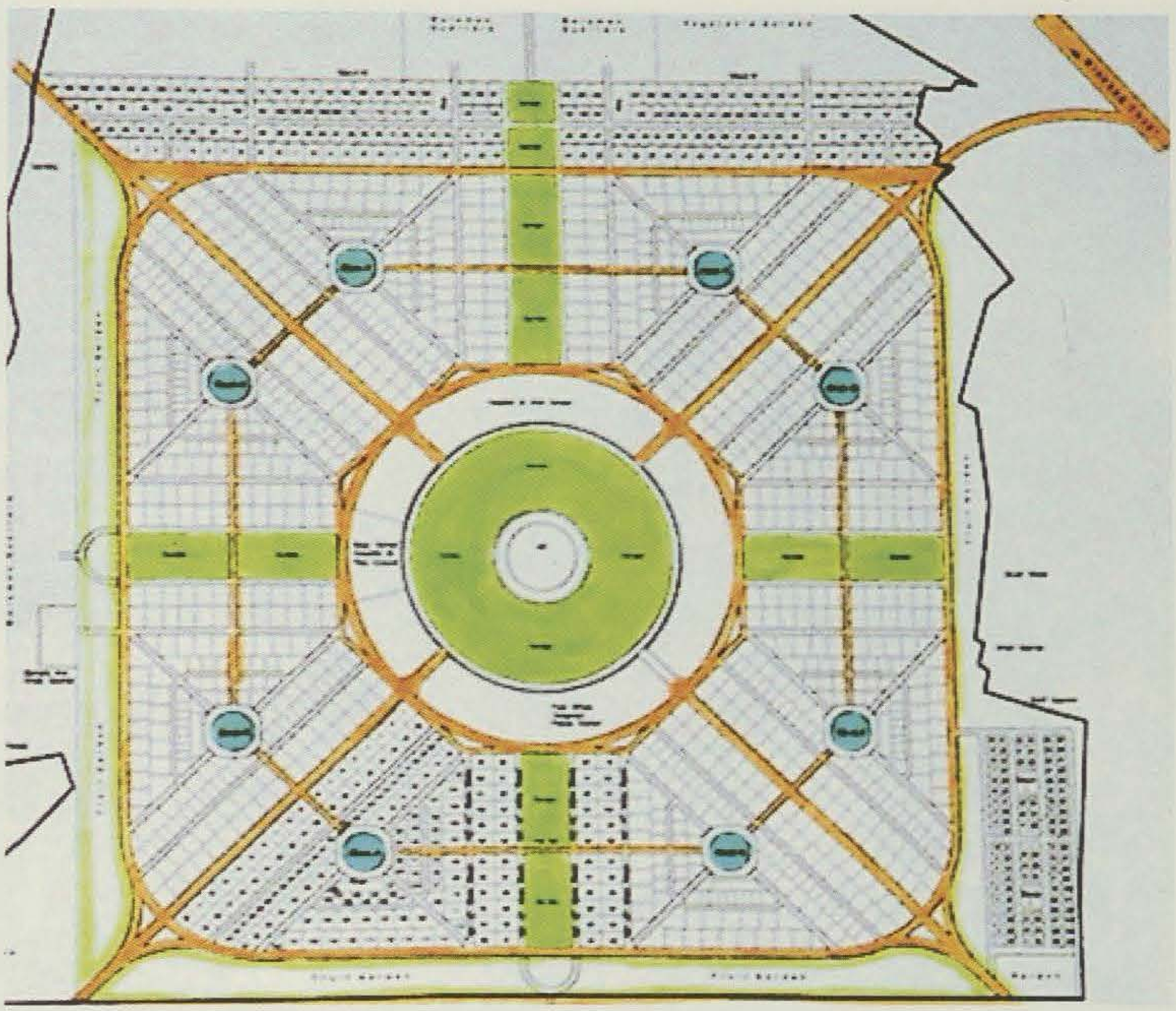
Although the Society was ready to start construction in 1921, it could only begin construction and the layout of the Town in 1923 due to the delay in the acquisition of the land. The first allotments were made in 1924 on the basis of a numbering system to ensure equity and justice. The Founder Members were given extra marks in the system. By 1930, 834 plots were taken , 358 of A class, 169 of B class and 307 of C class, the whole community belonging to the 'upper middle class'.

By 1930, Khem Chand could justifiably exult that 'In this country where the Garden City movement was non-existent and the co-operative movement little understood, it was no easy matter to collect over 900 individuals belonging to the most critical class and having different religious opinions.'

Khem Chand spelled out his plan of the Town: 'My idea is that the town should be square in shape. In the centre of the town there should be a flower garden of 35 Bighas (about 70 acres) and around the garden there should be a circular road, and on the circular road there should be located the stores, market, post office, etc. Then covering them should come the boys' school and girls' school, the nursery, the clubs and the hospital. All these public buildings, being

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Plan of Model Town (1935): An idealized geometric plan for a town for the native elite, emulating the park-like environs of the British residential areas in the city.



in the centre of the town, the houses will be located on four roads in concentric square rings around them.'

The government committee chaired by Sir H. J. Maynard, in their meeting of 16 November 1920, suggested, among other things, that a design competition be organized for the layout of the town, and a prize offered for the best. Accordingly, a competition was advertised and 32 entries were submitted. These were exhibited for a fortnight. Three thousand visitors, including the Lieutenant Governor, viewed the exhibition. A Selection Committee chose four plans and divided the prize money of Rs. 1,200 among them. One of the four was asked to combine the best features of the short-listed designs and prepare a final layout.

The layout plan, as finally approved, covered an area of 1,930 acres. The site was somewhat irregular, following the boundaries of the Rakh, but it was possible to plan for a square area within the

site with some irregular spaces left along three sides. In these leftover spaces were placed workmen's quarters, the *dhobi ghat* (laundry), and other services. The square proper had a green belt of fruit orchards around it, with a great circle in the middle. The central park, instead of the 70-acre park as visualised by Khem Chand, became one of about 100 acres. Khem Chand had hoped that 'there will be a Circular Lake about half a mile in circumference and 100 ft in width.' The lake was to be at the depth of the sub-soil water level so that it could be replenished by the ground water. A green hill on one side of the lake would lend special enchantment to the scene. This dream of Khem Chand never really materialized.

The Town provided for 1,264 plots with 158 plots in each of the eight sectors. The number of plots was increased as all the 300 provided in the C category were taken. As a result, a new Block called J was created next to C Block, as evidently the plots nearer the city were more popular. The outer ring road is 6 miles in length and 75 feet wide, the four diagonal roads are 90 ft wide, the inner circle is 2 miles in length and 70 ft wide with the total road length being 32 miles. The total area of the roads is about 240 acres. Side parks, each of which is 15 acres, which in effect separate every two sectors, also mark the axes of the square. The area originally earmarked for schools, hospital, clubs, offices, stores, etc. was 92 acres. The area of the central garden is about 100 acres with open public spaces thus forming more than 55 per cent of the area.

The number of houses actually constructed did not meet Khem Chand's hopes and by 1930 his writings reveal his disappointment with the committee; a sense of bitterness towards his critics also crept in. The Executive Committee was less responsive to the enthusiasm of the Secretary and began cutting operational costs. One unwise cut, according to Khem Chand, was the abolition of the post of architect ably filled for about six years by Mr. Khanna,



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The large sized plots originally planned have been subdivided into much smaller units resulting in a higher density. One of the few remaining early bungalows (circa 1930s) in a dilapidated state awaiting subdivision illustrating the combination of the European and Indian building elements in private residential architecture.

who prepared the plans for the houses in the beginning.

Nevertheless, a suburb sponsored by a private individual, driven by a belief in the co-operative movement, and dependent on the goodwill of the members of the society, did take shape. Life in this suburb was quiet and leisurely. It was a self-contained world, away from the humdrum of the city, where residents managed their own affairs in a democratic spirit. Elections were held, generating debate and controversy but ultimately resulting in a resolution and a consensus, setting an example for us in Pakistan today. Life in this suburb has been described by Mr Prakash Tandon,[21] ex-chairman of Lever (Hindustan). It is worth quoting in detail:

21. Tandon, Prakash *the Punjabi Century 1857-1947,* Harcourt, Brace & World Inc., NY 1961



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Offices of the Model Town Society: The hybrid design incorporated twin columns of Grecian style, spherical dome, deep eaves and brackets. Portland cement having made an appearance in India allowed for easy plastering of external surfaces and the exposed brickwork surface took a back seat till the rediscovery of the brick as an external surface in Lahore in the 1970s.

Model Town was a place, the like of which had never been and will never be seen again. It was almost entirely populated by retired government officials, who all addressed each other as Rai Sahib, Rai Bahadur, Khan Sahib or Khan Bahadur, Sardar Sahib or Sardar Bahadur. One after the other, old engineers, army doctors, retired civilians and session judges arrived on the spot and started laying their foundations. The results of their efforts were all curiously alike, because they were all patterned on the government bungalows which had been their homes, and the dak bungalows which had been the scene of so much of their activity. Each house was divided into two parts by a huge vestibule in the middle. On one side were dining and drawing-room and an office room; on the other side the bedrooms with dressing-rooms and bathrooms. The front verandah over-looked a lawn

> surrounded by flower-beds and cypresses. Here male visitors were received. On the other side was a verandah where meals were served... and an enclosed paved courtyard, the women's domain with kitchen and storerooms. Then there were the servants' quarters, spacious kitchen gardens and usually a small orchard... In its own way the house was like the British bungalows in front and grand uncle's house at the back.
>
> Having spent their lives as officials, (the Model Town Residents) now all tried to run the Society office and its poor secretary, who usually never stayed in the job for long. The retired conservator of forests took him and the malis to task about the trees and road hedges; the engineers, depending upon the branch of Public Works Department (PWD) they had belonged to, forced their advice about the roads, buildings, canal water ditches and electricity; while the retired ICS just laid the law down about everything.
>
> Combined with all this activity were the leisurely walks, the comradeship of the elders reminiscing on the life spent in service. There were also other aspects to the life in Model Town. Some old government servants, who had outlived their wives and married much younger women, kept raising a family long after retirement. Sometimes it happened that there were three happy events in the family, when mother, daughter, daughter-in-law were simultaneously delivered.

Undoubtedly just before the Partition, Model Town had achieved an ambience and a character all its own, though not quite what Dewan Khem Chand had in mind. Thus, Model Town took shape. It reflected at the highest level the aspirations of the Indian Gentleman, specially the native government servant of the Raj, to live like 'the *gora* sahib'. It sits astride the Indian Baboo's desire to live in a Bungalow while still retaining the spatial relationships for his family, the Zenana at the back of the house and the male domain in front. It reflects the British influence on the house design of Indian

upper/middle class families. It set a pattern in the 1930s that is still followed today.

Model Town is unique, not so much as a change in the native perception of life-style but that it was the brainchild of a native. While the life-style it introduced was acceptable to the British, and to that extent it was supported, the recognition of the native genius, who through sheer persistence carried it through, was less forthcoming. Model Town lives on but the contribution of Khem Chand is not acknowledged, nor was the replication of the idea promoted or encouraged. This comes into particular focus when compared with the publicity and promotion of the garden city idea in England.[22] The detailed account of Model town shows that the State was a participant to the extent it could 'control and guide', but there was subtle discouragement through bureaucratic red tape, in the insistence of the Society's having to buy more land than it needed, which almost led to its collapse.

By the end of the Raj, Lahore, the capital city of the Mughal emperor Akbar, the center of the Sikh Kingdom, stood transformed with a dual-faced identity. On the one hand was the old city with spillovers onto the areas adjacent to the Walled City and the Circular Road, and on the other, were the colonial additions of the Cantonment and the Civil Lines. The contrast was stark not only in the relative hygiene of the areas, but also in the urban pattern, the house design, shopping habits, living styles, and cultural ethos. The two aspects met at a fault line that ran from the railway station southward along the McLeod Road, turning east along Gowalmandi, skirting the Mayo Hospital and meeting the Circular Road near the Mazar of Data Gunj Baksh. The areas west of this line comprising Mayo Road (now Allama Iqbal Road), with its grand railway offices, Empress Road, Abbot Road down to the Lower Mall was the colonial

22. A number of housing projects were carried out in Britain viz., Bressbrook (1846); Sir Titas Salt's Saltaire (1832); George Cadburys' Bourneville (1879); Lever Brothers' Port Sunlight, near Liverpool; Sir Joseph Roundtree's Earswick near York (1905); and such others. These efforts were supported with legislation such as the British Housing Laws of 1890, the Housing and Town Planning Act 1909, the Housing Act 1919 which superseded the act of 1890, the Town and Country Planning Act of 1932, and the Housing Act of 1936.

city with the cantonment located further west. The focal point of this colonial city became the precinct of Anarkali with the Mall as an arterial connection with the cantonment. Anarkali and its surrounds housed the British administration, centers of education, viz, Government College, Mayo School of Arts (now the National College of Arts), Punjab University, the Public Library, Museum, centers of commerce, like the Tollinton Market and the Commercial Building, health facilities of hospitals and colleges, both for humans and animals, Banks, Post and Telegraph offices, the likes of which the people of Lahore had never seen before. The imprint of the colonial was thus clearly distinguishable with the imposing institutional buildings, however, the nearby Anarkali Bazaar, the old 'Suddar', with its tall temple and the shrine of Abdul Razak Makai of Sabzwar with its attached mosque known as the *Nila Gumbad* (Blue Dome) ensured that the city laid claim to being an Indian City. Traces of the pleasure gardens of Wazir Khan were by now obliterated, however the Baradari still existed as a silent reminder of bygone days.

Education During The Raj: Recasting The Native Architect

A vital component of the reconstruction of India was the education system, its curriculum and methodologies, imposed by the colonial Government. The 'Benefits of the British Raj'[1] was a topic that was introduced at the primary level and reiterated with increasing sophistication to the highest levels of graduation. Teaching methods relied on rote-learning, monotonous repetition, discouraging curiosity and questioning, accepting without hesitation what was told. In the study of history, language, mathematics and the sciences, the superiority of the English and Western cultures was continually emphasized. The Indian past was depicted as barbaric, despotic and tyrannical, with the British conquerors shown as liberators who brought civilization, stability and prosperity. Among the colonials, ideas of the superior and inferior races, with a God-given mandate to civilize lesser mortals were never far from the surface. The objective of the system of education, as enunciated in Macaulay's famous minute on education,[2] was nothing less than the reincarnation of the Indian in the spirit of the English, and to do so it was essential to denigrate past Indian culture as unworthy of continuity, which Macaulay did rather robustly. He pronounced 'that a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia'. Indian art was given the same treatment.

Partha Mitter[3] in his exhaustive, '*History of European Reactions to Indian Art*', surveys European views ranging from the French, Caylus, (1752), to the Germans, Rode and Riem (1803), the English, Taylor (1843) and one of the most influential art critics of the

1. *'Angrez Raj ke Fawaid'* (The Benefits of the British Raj) was part of the first book in primary schools.
2. Macaulay, T B '*Minute of 2 February 1835 on Indian Education*' in Macaulay, Prose and Poetry Selected by G.M. Young, Harvard University Press 1957 p 721
3. Partha Mitter *Much Maligned Monsters - A History of European Reactions to Indian Art* The University of Chicago Press 1977

Victorian period, Ruskin, among a host of others. 'Indian architecture betrays a lack of originality' (Caylus), 'whoever has some knowledge of art will not regard as beautiful the productions of the Hindus', 'Indian buildings could not be properly termed architecture after the Palladian principles ...but only essays in the infancy of art' (Rode and Riem), '(Indian arts)... display a profusion of barbaric ornaments and gaudy coloring' (Taylor) are some of the comments of Western scholars and experts on India quoted by Mitter. The reigning wisdom at the time of the British conquest of the Punjab was epitomized by John Ruskin, who saw the Indians as primitive, cruel and despotic, with an inferior quality of arts 'bound in the dungeons of their own corruption, encompassed only by doleful phantoms...(who) refuse all true representation of nature and produce nothing but grotesques and monsters'.[4] Thomas Carlyle of Victorian bent, on the one hand drooled over a girl of Indian origin[5] and on the other, gave vent to his racist views in, "*The Nigger Question*".[6]

The work of William Jones and his fellow scholars had shown clear links between the Europeans and the Aryan ancestors of India, also the discovery of biological evolution led to its crude extension to the socio-economic development of society, whereby the Europeans saw themselves as the leaders in the evolutionary race. Therefore on the one hand, a linkage with India was acknowledged, and simultaneously, on the other, the difference was emphasized as '...(in India) the Aryan Institutions had been arrested at an early stage of development (of) barbarism'.[7] When faced with buildings of undoubted merit such as the Taj, theories were floated to ascribe them to the Europeans,[8] or at best, it was termed an art of the past, which the present generation of natives had lost. In the

4. Ruskin, J *Two Paths* et al cited by Mitter.
5. Dalrymple William, *The White Mughals op cit*
6. Carlyle, T. *Occasional Discourse on the Nigger Question,* pamphlet, 1853
7. Metcalf, *T R in Ideologies of the Raj* citing Henry Maine's *The Effect of Observations of India on Modern European Thought* 1871.
8. See E.B. Havel, *The Taj and its Designers* in *Essays on Indian Art, Industry and Education,* G.A. Natesan & Co., Madras, 1903

view of the Raj, therefore, Indians were unfit for fine art, and were only good craftsmen who needed guidance to integrate the higher values of the European Classics in their products. Sensitivity to Architecture and Fine Arts, as higher expressions of creativity was denied in the Indians, who therefore required long tutelage before they could match the European standards of aesthetics. The teaching of arts, and particularly architecture,[9] the 'mother of all arts', was never introduced, except as Industrial Art or the 'useful' art to serve the overall colonial construct. Indian art, *per se* received very little patronage or encouragement from colonial officialdom.

The debates on an appropriate style of architecture for India, were restricted to the Raj administrators and imperial architects; the continuity and right to rule after the Mughals was sought in an architecture created by colonial architects, ignoring the inheritors and keepers of the great Indian tradition.[10] The symbolic value of architecture was well understood by the Raj, and therefore Indians, native architects, descendants of the builders of the Taj, were never commissioned to build structures which might put them on an equal plane of creativity with the colonial masters. For major buildings, such as the Governor's Residence or a major railway terminus, the Government of various provinces, and even the Government of India, contracted out the post of consulting architect in the Building Department, and usually a British architect was enticed to come out to the colonies. It was always a short contract, from three to four years, and never seen by the incumbent as a life-long career.[11] His interest and knowledge of Indian architecture was at best that of a dilettante. Even such British architects chafed at the administrative control of the engineers and the lack of awareness of architecture by the engineering community, and their

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9. The first institution dedicated to the teaching of architecture was Sir J J School of Architecture, Bombay

10. See Metcalf, T.R. opcit.

11. Almost all architects came out to India in their early years and then returned home to continue practice in Britain.

unwillingness to learn.[12]

The Raj thus emphasized both the points, the superiority of the British and the degeneracy of the Indians, and thus their incapability to produce art. But herein was the contradiction that the Raj could not overcome: the grand buildings were few and far between, yet the great mass of buildings needing to be built throughout India could not be part of the 'grand effect'. Great effort was made to set a high tone for the grand colonial architecture, but the limited number of British architects in India did not allow sustaining the same effort for the large numbers of smaller structures required by the army, railways and civil administration, the quality of which was then allowed to be determined by the British engineers turned architects, and later their native assistants. This dichotomy produced on the one hand, the grand colonial architecture restricted to a few buildings, and on the other, the vast quantity of official architecture, which, save for a few exceptions, was repetitive, dull and lifeless.

Col Swinton S. Jacob, Engineer to Jeypore State, in his preface to a collection of drawings called the *Jeypore Portfolio*, wrote in 1890:

> The Indian Public Works Department, as a body, has not hitherto been successful in its architectural efforts, and all who take an interest in architecture, and who know what vast stores of material lie scattered over the land, must regret the poverty of design and detail which, as a rule, characterizes modern buildings in this country. Take any simple building – such as a sentry box, for instance – and see how it is treated by the Public Works Department, and compare it with the graceful little domes which surmount the battlements of an old native fortress. Not only do they charm the eye at a distance, but on looking closer one sees the stone plinth eaves to shelter the soldier on duty, and protect him from sun and rain. In some cases, expense may be the cause but too often this

12. Begg, John FRIBA, *Introduction to Educational Buildings*, op. cit.

> is not the case. It does not cost much more to break a wall surface up into ornamental panels than it does to build it solid. Standard plans are too often produced, and buildings are erected by men who have no sympathy with Oriental architecture, men who have never made any attempt to take advantage of the architectural wealth which is scattered around, and hence the poverty of design, especially in details, and the stereotyped conventionalities which destroy all individuality, and characterize most of the buildings raised by Anglo-Indians.

Cultural dominance did not allow for the flowering or promotion of Indian art; it was the need of the Imperial colonizers to deny the cultural vitality and creativity of the natives. There was also the fear of the power of the idea; the possibility of demonstrated equality in the arts and in the all too visible architecture. The colonials were hesitant to pass on newly developed technology and at the same time to allow for any signs of native culture that might upset the dominant/subservient relationship. Architecture as a serious subject of study and training in India, particularly for the natives, never quite entered the picture, and schools of art, where allowed, taught 'industrial arts', as they might fit into the colonial trade and satisfy the market in Europe for the exotic wares of the Orient.

The primary objectives of the Raj were always the creation of favorable conditions for British trading interests, efficient collection of revenue and increase and expansion of the land under cultivation, the base of revenue generation. The colonial administration introduced railways for rapid mobility of the military as well as to improve trade logistics; they launched irrigation projects to bring erstwhile wasteland under cultivation to increase revenue. As a result British industry benefited with the increasing captive markets and the Government of India gathered larger revenues to spend

upon themselves. The increase in new engineering works created a demand for engineering skills, and the growing British Empire in India soon needed ever-increasing numbers of engineers to run the expanding Raj. Almost all the British engineers that came out to India from the mother country, in the 18th and 19th centuries were military and in times of peace, they were then also asked to help the civil administration in building roads, bridges and other required structures.

Towards the end of the 18th century, British holdings in India began to acquire a permanence, which prompted a survey of the available resources for exploitation in the conquered territories. Planning of military expeditions to enlarge the British territories also necessitated a thorough knowledge of the land, and thus techniques of topographical survey became an important part of the training of personnel. The earliest technical school established by the East India Company was the School of Surveying in Madras, now Chennai, in May 1794 and, importantly, it was only open to English boys, while natives were kept out. Technology, and therefore concomitantly, technical education, was a primary weapon in the increasing domination of the world by Europe in the 18th century, and was therefore guarded and restricted to Europeans.

As early as 1800, the British started a comprehensive trigonometric survey of India[13] to assess the resources of their future empire. The survey, the brainchild of Colonel William Lambton and staffed by Military engineers, was a mammoth exercise, which took nearly fifty years to complete. This huge venture required not only a large number of unskilled laborers (*coolies*) but also some native skilled hands to help as assistants. The training of natives in these skills could not be avoided too long. By the middle of the 19th century the British and other Europeans had been in India for

13. For details see the excellent account of the survey by John Keay, *The Great Arc*, HarperCollins, 2000.

over two hundred years and there were a number of children of 'pure' European extraction who could not be sent to Britain for education, and an even greater number of Anglo-Indian children who the British trusted more than the natives. The East India Company in their priority of technical education placed the 'pure' European children first, and the Anglo-Indian children second, and if any vacancies were left over, natives would be considered. However this school alone could not satisfy the needs of the ever-increasing works planned by the colonials to promote their trade and increase revenue.

Colonel Sir Proby T. Cautley, a military engineer, working for the North West Provinces[14] conceived of building the Ganga Canal at Hardwar to irrigate the Jamuna-Ganges doaba. The canal took fourteen years, 1840 to 1854, to complete. During this period he also introduced the first railway in India, in 1851, using it to bring construction material from a distance of five miles from Piran Kaliar to Roorkee for the construction of the Solani Viaduct. Both programs needed engineers who, in the beginning of the 19th century, were in short supply, even in the rapidly industrializing Europe. The only solution, Cautley realized, was to train native technical assistants on the lines of the native Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs) of the British Indian Army. Such an intermediary cadre would help in communication with, and supervision of the native labor force. The special education needs of such a cadre were basic English language skills and enough technical understanding of the work in hand to supervise the work force in a thorough and efficient manner.

The East India Company, however, approached the question of the technical education of the natives with apprehension about security and cost. Trained natives could one day turn against them, and State expenses on education of the natives had to be useful

14. Roughly the present UP of India

and productive in the sense of enhancing Government revenue or directly helping in the maintenance of the Raj. The profitability of the irrigation projects however seems to have turned the decision towards setting up institutions for the training of local engineers. The Company agreed to extend the technical training to natives whenever the first two categories, viz Europeans and Anglo-Indians, were not available, and approved the setting up of a suitable training institution for Engineering.

The training of local assistant engineers was started in Roorkee in 1847. Initially known as the Thomason College of Engineering, it offered a two-year program for civil engineering, a one-year program for overseers and another one-year program for sub-overseers. The first two were open to Europeans and Anglo-Indians, in that order, and the last one was for Indians only. As part of the civil engineering program a course was included on architectural drawing and design, based on European designs and examples and thus the concepts of the trainees regarding architecture were influenced by the European classic ideals. In 19th century Britain, Architecture was mainly discussed as decoration and a matter of choosing a particular style for a building. It was a century of engineering, Military, Railways, or Irrigation, and architecture was perceived as only the creating of a 'picturesque' dimension to a project. In India the profit-motivated officials of the East India Company saw the vast majority of construction works as simply utilitarian and not in need of any decoration, and were quite happy to leave the bulk of building to the engineer turned architect.

Architecture, in colonial India, thus became a subpart of engineering. For a professional training in arts and architecture, a combination of theory and practice is the corner block of academics. The one or two courses offered at Roorkee were only theoretical

and historical, without the opportunity to learn through practice and study of the native architecture, whose excellent examples were part of the vast Indian landscape. It was more the acquiring of a familiarity with the 'Styles of Architecture' through a perusal of textbooks, magazines, and pattern books etc., based on the European experience. It is therefore understandable that while Roorkee produced excellent native engineers such as Kanhiya Lal, Ganga Ram et. al., the corresponding cadre of well-trained architects was missing. These products of Roorkee were no measure to the native architects who, however, were not recognized by the Raj, and without such a recognition and patronage the native architects could not really survive. With this combination, suppression of the native genius and unleashing of mediocrity in the form of semi-trained architects/engineers, the quality of 'public' architecture fell far below that of the grand official architecture. For routine building activity, the engineers acted as architects. An assistant draftsman drew up a plan or elevation and the executive engineer approved and implemented the same. Engineers and assistant engineers, with some training in architectural decoration, became the core of the British-trained experts on architecture. The inadequate European biased training in architecture was most unsuited to the understanding of the native arts of building. Not only was there, thus, an inbuilt prejudice against everything native, it also actively promoted poor copies of European architectural features. Worse, the traditional masters were labeled *mistris*, just a notch above masons, and the ill-trained engineer/architect, given a much higher status, then dictated the architectural forms and spatial design. Architecture as a profession in India thus lost its source and aesthetic sustenance.

There was therefore this anomaly; on the one hand the British were unwilling to recognize local architects, yet on the other, they

were unwilling to give a serious focus to architectural education on the lines that they gave to engineering education. No wonder the quality of official architecture suffered. British officers and graduates of Roorkee had a privileged position as members of the respective engineering services. When a unified PWD was created in 1863, it was mainly for the construction of roads, bridges, irrigation works and buildings, and staffed by engineers. In the absence of British architects, all designs were produced under the supervision of the engineers and they came to have the final say regarding the quality and appropriateness of design. When called upon to give design decisions, they invariably based it on their exposure to European architecture, rather than the more relevant local Indian, of which they knew next to nothing.

H H Locke, Principal, Calcutta School of Art, in a memorandum written in 1873 on art education observed, 'In India, architecture and engineering are practiced by the same person, and not as in England where the design for a public building would be produced by one man, and (engineering) would be the work of another ... graduates employed in the Public Works Department ... are frequently called upon to supply directions ... requiring knowledge of architectural forms, which I fear, very few of them possess.' In his report on the Mayo School of Arts for the year 1879-80, the Director of Public Education wrote, 'Major Brandreth, the Principal of the Rurki College, who visited the Mayo School of Arts, and showed great interest in the work, told the Principal (Kipling) that the studies at Rurki are strictly confined to English engineering, and yet the draughtsmen trained there design architecture. One of them indeed is now, Kipling believes, employed to design a palace for one of the Punjab Chiefs. It is no disparagement, he adds, to the draughtsmen employed by the Public Works Department to say, that they are, as a rule, ignorant of decorative design and of Indian

architecture. If the work of the Department were strictly confined to engineering, this would be a matter of little moment, but in actual fact they design the buildings which lead the native taste.' The native taste and creativity was of no concern to the Raj whose primary objective was to downplay local artists and architects and to promote European based aesthetics deriving from the Greek classics.

Kipling wrote about these 'official' designers employed 'with the classes stirred by English education, (to whom) foreign styles stand for enlightenment and progress':

> 'Hitherto these (graduates of Roorkee) ... who have been trained in the engineering and building science taught at our engineering colleges have neither knowledge of nor sympathy with indigenous forms. The ancient prejudice against manual labour still exists, and, as a rule, our native subordinates of the Public Works Department have only knowledge of the bookish theory. There are hundreds of them indeed, earning relatively large salaries, who are mere copyists and tracers. The best *mistries* of the old school are often skilful in several crafts ... The engineering subordinate of the new school on the other hand can seldom handle a tool of any kind. That there is nothing to be expected from them as far as art is concerned may seem a hard saying but, it is to be feared, it is a true one.' Here Kipling was obviously swimming against the tide of the Raj .

Commenting on architectural education, Kipling continues, 'Roorkee training is now considered for all who would attempt to design. ... Surely it is a strange omission that in a college for Indian students there should be no Oriental department. Not a single native draftsman turned out from this school has been taught the architecture of the country... the matchless art of the

> land is entirely neglected in an institution which has come by virtue of its official prestige to represent our notions of art to the people, and especially to the rulers of native States, many of them are under the impression that they display their enlightenment by securing the services of Roorkee engineers... the classes touched by English education are indifferent to indigenous forms of art, and prefer those of Europe as being more civilized. The trading classes do well to adhere to Hindustani types, but the landed gentry prefer to range themselves with their rulers and thus to emphasize their distinction from the vulgar.[15] But year by year good men of the mistry class, fully saturated with the best traditions, grow rarer.'[16]

Kipling foresaw the possibility of a fusion in that:

> 'there are examples (such as at Bulandshahr), of domestic architecture carried out by native architects *(mistries)* which show that progress of some sort is possible; there is an attempt to assimilate the foreign element, and the workman is, in fact, carrying out with new forms the process by which his forefathers, generations ago, working on Mohammadan canons, formed the style of architecture in which he works most freely. If the design of the future buildings of India, which means also the design principles of most of the minor arts could be expected to remain in his hands, it might be left to him with the certainty that in some way, at present unforeseen, foreign elements would be absorbed and transfused as before into something rich and strange.'[17]

John Lockwood Kipling, with a remarkable clarity of vision, attempted to resuscitate the neglected indigenous profession of architects whom the Government dismissed as mere '*mistries*'. He understood that current relevant architecture could only be achieved

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15. ibid.
16. ibid.
17. ibid.

through developing vibrant links with past practices. He attempted to train the progeny of the practitioners of the living tradition in architecture in the Punjab to bring forth an architecture responding to their contemporary needs and ambience, relevant to the society that they lived in and such as would also satisfy the colonial clientele. He attempted nothing less than to create a stream of trained architects different from those trained by the Government on the Roorkee pattern.

Bhai Ram Singh, whose work was later to change the architectural face of Lahore, was a product of this stream of architects. Never an engineer, he was happy to call himself a carpenter, architect, modeller etc. He never made it to any of the Government services other than teaching at the Mayo School of Arts. In the class-conscious society of India, both in the local and even more so, in the colonial administration, he was something below a subedar, not an officer. It was of no consequence to the rulers that he produced architecture that was vibrant and living, as opposed to the still-born efforts of government-trained engineers who attempted to replicate Greek and Roman features, for to them he was just a '*mistri*'.

This bias shows up in the writing of history and in the societal structuring. Syed Mohammad Latif, a revenue official turned historian of the 19th century, continually credits buildings designed by Ram Singh to the Executive Engineer. Within the native colonial societal construct, the engineering profession enjoyed a higher status than the profession of architecture, which in fact was only recognized with some deference when a British architect was on the scene. Therefore it is no surprise that the architect was very rarely acknowledged as the designer, the leading member of the

building process, and construction activity was seen only as the work of engineers and contractors. A rare case of mention of the architect occurs in the building of the Punjab University Senate Hall. It clearly states Ram Singh as the architect and this is the only example the authors have seen, where a building has been credited to the native architect. This practice continued till the 1960s, whereby all works were ascribed to the engineer rather than the architect.

Establishment of the Mayo School of Arts

Unrelated to the engineering and construction program, an initiative taken to develop the crafts and wares of the Punjab with the establishment of the Mayo School of Industrial Arts in 1875, was to have a far-reaching effect on the arts, crafts and architecture of Lahore and indeed the Punjab. Like most initiatives during the colonial period its genesis lay in events in the 'mother' country and its capital London.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Britain held a dominant position in world trade and Britannia 'ruled the waves' with British commerce enjoying unprecedented prosperity. However by the third decade, French and German goods, especially silks and household luxury items, began to capture a greater share of the market with their better quality of design. As a response to the perceived threat from the Continent, a Parliamentary Committee was set up in 1835, to develop a state system of education for artisans and workers in Industry.[18] In 1837 the first 'Normal' School of Design was established in London with an additional twenty-one schools created by 1852. The schools were required to avoid fine art and to devise means to impart techniques and

18. Dutta, Arindam, *Designing the Present: The Cole Circle and the Architecture of an Imperial Bureaucracy 1851-1901*, unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Princeton University, June 2001.

skills of industrial design. These schools, however, could not be sustained, as on the one hand, the artisans and workers who were to be the main beneficiaries did not feel the need to attend such schools, and on the other hand, the manufacturers did not wish to financially support such an institution. Often the school's most enthusiastic pupils were middle-class women pursuing art for leisure or women who could use the cheap art education for advancement of their careers as governesses etc. In 1848 the Board of Trade set about to reform these schools. Teams were organized to visit French and German centers of industry and to study their systems of design and art education.

The Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce[19] based in London, who awarded prizes for good designs developed for use in industry, sent a delegation consisting of artists and an architect to attend the French National Exhibition in 1849, who on their return advocated the holding of a similar exhibition in London. The idea, with the support of Prince Albert, Queen Victoria's consort, expanded to become, 'The Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations'. The Exhibition was held in 1851 in London's Hyde Park, in a building revolutionary in itself, the Crystal Palace, built of steel and glass by a major railway contractor, and designed by a gardener, Joseph Paxton. It was indeed a huge glass house that challenged the industrial ingenuity of the time. The Exhibition was a great success with net profits of 186,000 pounds, a very large sum in those days.

One of the major reasons for the success of the Exhibition was the great interest generated by the wares and exhibits from India. 'During the Exhibition prominent aesthetes and intellectuals as diverse as Gustave Flaubert and Gottfried Semper, as well as a

19. The society presently the RSA, was founded in 1754 by William Shipley, a painter and social activist, with the manifesto, 'to embolden enterprise, enlarge science, refine arts, improve our manufactures and extend our commerce'.

host of British public figures (with the notable exception of Ruskin) decried what they deemed the execrable taste of the objects produced by mechanized industry in Europe when compared to the hand-made textiles, metalwork and ivory work from the East, most notably India, which due to its colonized status had a bigger display than any non-Western country and most countries on the continent. Visitors commented on what they deemed 'the superior patterns, the harmony of colour, the richness of material and the subtlety of application'[20] of the exhibits from the Orient.

The Great Exhibition thus generated two streams: reform of art education, and trade in oriental wares. The move to reform the art schools ballooned into a determined effort to recast state-sponsored art education. A new museum and a school of art were born as conjoined twins in the borough of Brompton, renamed South Kensington. Henry Cole[21] who had been the moving spirit in the organization of the Exhibition was appointed in charge of the museum and the school. With the savings from the Exhibition a plot of land was purchased and goods were bought from the Exhibition to be housed in a museum attached to the school. Almost one third of the exhibits bought for the museum and for use by the art students were of Indian origin. This stream, contributed to the arts and crafts movement of William Morris, whose textile designs drew inspiration from the orient.[22] The second stream launched by the Exhibition was the discovery of the highly lucrative trade in oriental wares and crafts. The industrial products catered for the mass market, while the handcrafted items attracted the wealthier sections of society who were willing to pay for the unique rather than the ordinary. The profit in this section was also much higher due to the meager wages paid to the crafts-persons in India.

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20. Ibid. p 22

21. Henry (King) Cole, Sir, son of Captain Henry Robert Cole was born in 1808 , died 1882

22. Pevsner, N, *Pioneers of Modern Design: from William Morris to Walter Gropius,* The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1949.

The designs of oriental carpets attracted particular attention at the Exhibition. Compared to machine-made floor coverings, the hand-made carpets from Persia and India with their richness of colour, variety of design and excellence of execution, completely swayed the aristocratic sensitivities not only of Britain but also of the Continent. With the great demand generated and the desire to keep production costs low, as if the extremely low wages paid to the worker were high, carpet-making was introduced in the prisons. What came first, the chicken or the egg, is not clear, but the production of carpets in prisons shot up with the bonded labor being paid only nominal wages. This outright exploitation of prisoners was justified as teaching of useful trades to the inmates. 'Legend has it that Ganga Singh, ruler of Bikaner at the turn of the century , acquired some carpets in Europe and showed them to his courtiers. After great accolades from the king's minions, it was politely pointed out by a jailer that the carpets had been made in their own jail.'[23]

The Indian artisans were rediscovered and in contrast to the earlier century of neglect, a special interest in their continued productivity was generated. Great emphasis was laid on the maintenance of the Indian tradition for that was what really sold, but it was to be adapted to European furniture, tapestries, floor coverings, architectural decoration such as interior paneling, ceramics, wooden screens etc. The Indian crafts tradition as adapted to European markets and sensibilities became the guiding principle, and demands for its products rose manifold, to the degree that the administrators bemoaned the 'lazy' Orientals when the demands from the home country were not met.

For over a century, from the 1750s to the1850s, the destruction

23. Dutta, Arivindam, *op cit*

of the native ruling classes, the patrons of local arts, led to the decay and gradual disappearance of the artists and artisans. The new native rulers that the British installed were overly keen to show their loyalty to the *Angrez* and preferred to surround themselves with imitations of European goods rather than the products of local crafts. In this vicious circle, the crafts had been pushed away from the centres of power, and the great *Karkhanas* of Mughal times in major centres such as Delhi, Agra, Mushidabad etc., had all but closed down. Only in remoter areas, where the industrial goods from Europe had not penetrated, a semblance of the old crafts survived.

Thus the British administrators were now faced with a dilemma. On the one hand they could not be seen to discourage the continued inflow of the industrial products from Britain; at the same time they had to ensure the continued fulfillment of the new demands generated by the Great Exhibition. Thus the native arts had to be resuscitated but in a limited way. And, of course, what better way of ensuring their continued growth and productivity than to set up schools of crafts and arts in India on the model of the South Kensington Museum and School!

In the beginning, that is, in the late 18th century, in British eyes, the dominant belief was the superiority of British culture combined with the efforts of the missionaries to civilize Indian society and to rid it of unpleasant features, especially the barbaric practice of *sati*. Indian art was regarded as boorish, depicting elements of cruelty, or vulgar, with sculpture of explicit sex, or wasteful oriental splendour achieved at terrible cost to ordinary mortals. Later in the early nineteenth century, articles in local papers (printed in English and meant mainly for the British serving

or settled in India) began to highlight the quality of Indian art. A lively debate began on Indian arts and crafts, their value in the European markets and how best to ensure their continued production and high quality. The debate, which at times became acrimonious, led to the creation of a Department of Archaeology in November 1861, with Major General Sir Alexander Cunningham as Archaeological Surveyor, to 'make an accurate description of such remains as most deserve notice, with the history of them so far as is traceable and a record of the traditions that are retained regarding them.'[24]

The effort to conserve the traditions of native arts and to promote the crafts, albeit selectively, began to coalesce in the need to set up training institutes, for the native workers. 'In 1853 Sir Charles Trevelyan proposed that a network of British-run schools be established for training Indian craftsmen and promoting their economically threatened industries'.[25] The main reason for setting up the Schools of Art, unabashedly stated in the official correspondence of the Empire in a letter from the Secretary of State for India, to the Governor General, referring to the Education Dispatch of 1854, was 'to prepare the way for providing the masses of India with useful and practical knowledge suited to every station of life and thus avoiding the multiplication of the numbers of the literary and professional classes beyond the demand for their service.'[26] There was no question of Indians having a sense of the fine arts or architecture, or deserving of art education per se that reflect the higher levels of culture and civilization.

A school for the teaching of crafts had been established in

24. Department of Archaeology report

25. Tarapur, Mahrukh '*John Lockwood Kipling and British Art Education in India*' in Victorian Studies Vol. 24 number 1 Autumn 1980

26. Papers relating to the Maintenance of Schools of Art in India as State Institutions from 1893-96; Selection from the Records of the Government of India, Home Office, No.356. (Calcutta: Office of the Superintendent of Government Printing 1898)

Madras in 1850. This however had a missionary bent as it was set up for the benefit of Eurasian orphans so that they might learn a useful trade. Schools were set up in Calcutta in 1854, and in Bombay in 1857, for continued training of the Indian craftsmen and artisans with a view to the likes and dislikes of the European market. In a memorandum regarding a school of 'Art and Industry' addressed to the Officiating Registrar, Punjab University College, in 1872, Baden Powell stated that as early as 1864 the subject was under consideration and that lack of funds had precluded any progress. In 1868 a Committee was again formed for the subject which agreed 'That a school , such as it is desirable to establish, should embrace – (1) Instruction in Ornamental Art as applicable to manufactures and decoration of buildings and (2) actual execution of work.' The matter proceeded at a slow pace till 24 September 1874 when the Secretary of State for India, sanctioned the setting up of a school of industrial art and design and the appointment of Mr. J L Kipling as Principal on a salary of Rs 800 per mensum.

John Lockwood Kipling, born in 1837, visited the Great Exhibition at the age of fourteen and was, apparently, smitten to follow a career in the arts. He attended classes at the Stoke School of Art and worked at the South Kensington Museum, and later at the Victoria & Albert Museum, from 1860 to 1864, where he saw at close quarters the examples of Indian crafts and design. He joined the Bombay School of Art as an architectural sculptor in 1865 and did not quite agree with the teaching methods being followed there. The Bombay school had a large collection of casts and sketches of Greek art and other European examples and taught the students to draw from them rather than from any native examples. The results were stultified reproductions against which the young Kipling protested. By 1875, when J. Lockwood Kipling

arrived in Lahore to set up the Mayo School of Industrial Arts, some merit had been discovered in the native arts. According to Syed Mohammad Latif, ' the courses of instruction (at the MSA) bear a general resemblance to those followed in European schools with the exception that all the examples of architecture, decoration etc are oriental in character, and principles of Indian design are considered of the first importance.'

The Mayo School of Industrial Arts was established with the avowed purpose to 'improve the taste of native people as regards beauty of form and finish in the articles of daily use'[27] The sons of artisans were considered to be the appropriate students for the Mayo School of Industrial Arts. Kipling brought years of experience to the School and he had formulated a clear policy of art education as applied to the Indian scene. Kipling gave a different color to the Mayo School of Arts in that he developed and enunciated a clear policy of art education. A reading of his reports to the Government brings out the main features of his thinking and practice.

In his very first report[28] Kipling stated, 'that it is his object to make the institution emphatically a school of "Industrial Art", and to give boys a training that they can turn to practical account in after (sic) life'. This statement was obviously addressed to the Government of the Punjab who very much desired a 'utility or usefulness' of investments in education. Kipling also laid emphasis on giving his students who came from diverse backgrounds a general elementary education in language and arithmetic. He advocated the attachment of scholarship to each school of industry,

27. Papers relating to the Maintenance of Schools of Art in India as State Institutions from 1893-96; Selection from the Records of the Government of India, Home Office, No.356. (Calcutta: Office of the Superindent of Government Printing 1898) p 62, quoted in Tarapur, Mahrukh *John Lockwood Kipling and British Art Education in India* in Victorian Studies Volume 24, No.1, Autumn 1980, Indiana University.

28. Report of 1875



28

The Principal of the Mayo School of Arts, John Lockwood Kipling among his students. Ram Singh is probably the one sitting on the ground on his teacher's right.

Photograph National College of Arts Archives.

to attract the most intelligent boys of the artisan class, and to be able to give them a good elementary education, whilst instructing them in the principles of their own trade.[29]

The junior classes were instructed in elementary free-hand drawing and the elements of geometry and drawing from plants and objects; whilst some of the more advanced boys were engaged in copying the fresco decorations of Wazir Khan's mosque which are very good examples of Indian wall painting. The senior class was employed in studies of Indian design from objects in the museum, from photographs, books and drawings and also in geometry and drawing foliage from nature, and in studies of original

29. ibid

design. Some of the drawings and original designs of these students were exhibited at Simla in the Art Exhibition 1881 and showed conclusively the great success that had attended the instruction imparted during the short time that had elapsed since the establishment of the school of art. Kipling pointed out that whilst insisting on the essential unity of the art of design, especially of Indian art, care had been taken to keep each student engaged, as far as possible, in studies within his own line.[30] In short he summed up the training of architects as 'I know of no practice so instructive as that of studying existing architecture and ornament than by carefully drawing it'.[31]

Kipling made a significant departure from colonial thinking and the industrial art education methodologies in vogue at the schools in Madras, Calcutta and Bombay, in that he insisted that the Mayo School of Industrial Arts in Lahore should be a school engaged in real-life projects. He felt that students stood to benefit a great deal this way, rather than by being offered the abstract art education then in vogue. He accepted that it is not perhaps to be desired that the energies of an educational institution should be wholly absorbed in production, but he was convinced that the intelligence and powers of the students are more fully brought out by a demand for some special design for a given purpose. He felt that an honest blacksmith's shop would be a more useful institution than a school in India that sets out to teach the theory and principles of art *pure et simple*. He also hoped to engage the public within the aesthetic circle of the School, for he understood that in colonial society the public follows the lead of the Government, as had been proved in Bombay, where both European and native builders did their best to emulate the decorative features of the new Government buildings.[32]

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30. Report of 1876
31. Report 1882-83
32. ibid

In this connection Kipling also solicited work for the School and his students, as he felt that the students had achieved sufficient maturity to carry out large works. In the report for 1877-78, he wrote, 'I would strongly urge the necessity of some large, and at the same time, responsible work in the way of decoration being commenced by the more advanced pupils under my direction, as I am convinced they are now sufficiently instructed in Art to derive a lasting benefit from such an undertaking'. Having obtained and carried out such work, Kipling was able to prove that the School could meet its expenditure. Earnings of the school from various sources, though not large, according to him, were respectable. All materials used in remunerative work were purchased from that fund, and only things used in drawing and theoretic training, were charged to the contingencies of the school. As a stimulus to exertion, small honoraria were given, on receipt of payment (from clients) for certain work, to youths who had done well. This proved to be a good incentive to the students to carry out the work.[33]

Kipling faced a number of problems, the main being the cultural bias of students of India against manual work. Once admitted to a school, the students aspired to a white-collar job and saw manual work as being below their class. According to Kipling the chief drawbacks of the school were perhaps inherent in the classes from which the students were drawn. They included deficiency of general education, want of initiative and enterprise, and an imperfect conception of the intention and aim of the school. The worst type of pupil, he thought, was the youth who had a contempt for manual work, who hoped to acquire easily the knack of tracing or copying an engineering drawing, who came late and left early, who had a desultory and dawdling habit of doing only what was set before

33. Report of 1879-80

him, who did not even affect an interest in it, and who yet complained that he ought to receive a more liberal stipend, or be placed in some well-salaried appointment. Another difficulty was that of finding out exactly how much each man did and thought for himself. Some resigned themselves to being made to do things with almost as much indifference as if they were cogs in a wheel. The Principal also complained of inveterate slovenliness, for which nothing in his Bombay experience had prepared him. It seems to be thought humiliating to wash a brush after painting, to keep a drawing clean, or to leave a bench tidy on giving over work.[34]

'It is to be regretted that the silly prejudice against manual labour and the ambition to wear a white coat should make modeling and moulding unpopular'. He did his utmost to discredit this notion, and tried to make the subject attractive by modelling before the men; but 'although they are interested in watching the progress of a bust from nature, the stupid idea that this is potter's work and of low degree is not easily shaken. And it is so essential that a man should have some inclination or liking for what he does, I am loth to *order* youths to join this class'.

His philosophy was vindicated when an officer from the PWD wrote to Kipling to say:

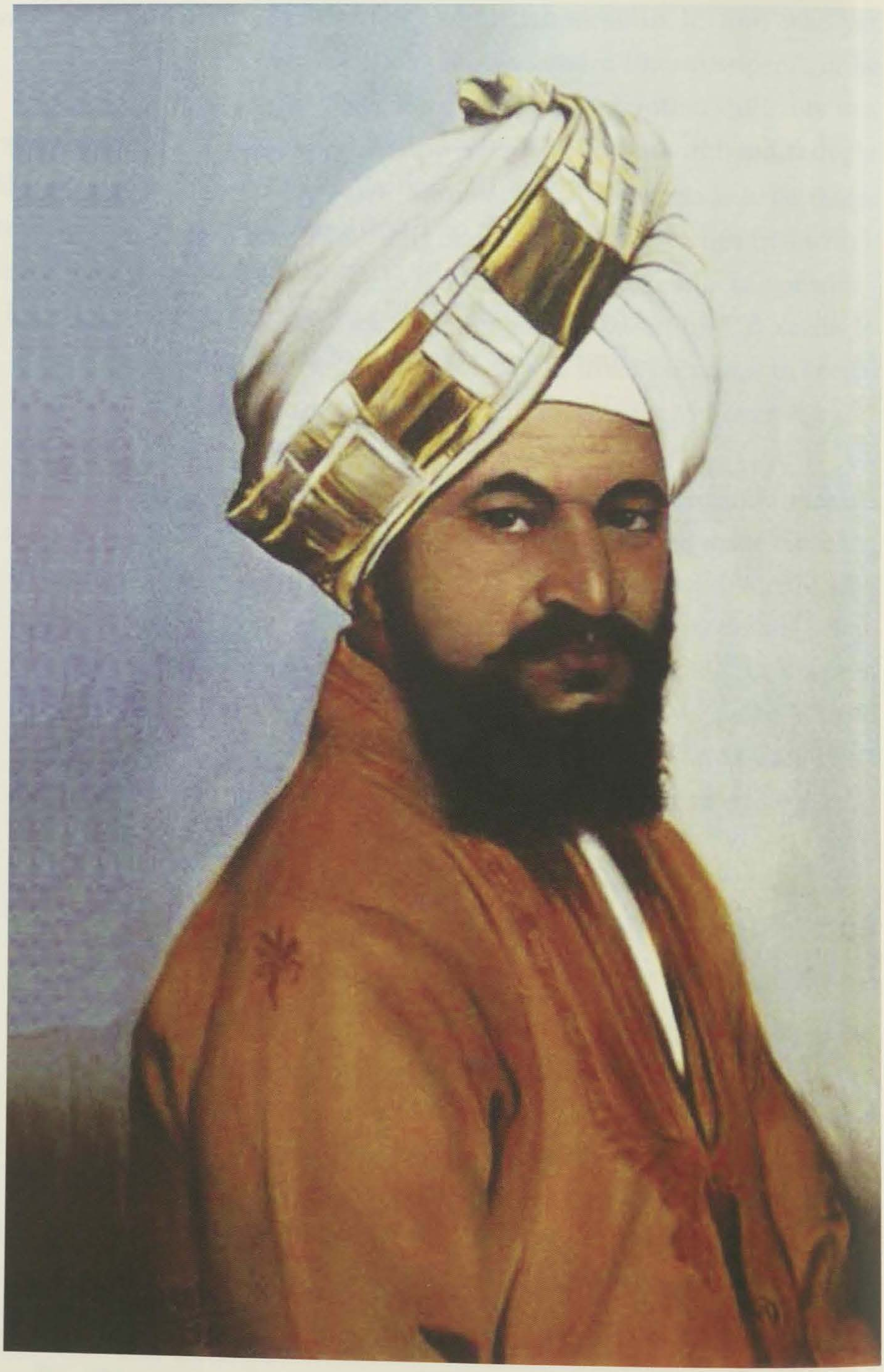
> 'I have an artisan draughtsman, a carpenter by trade, from the Mayo School of Art, who is in his own line, and for his pay, a very capable and useful man. He is just the class of man we much need in the Public Works Department to replace the old style of 'Tracer'. The latter, has, as a class, no real knowledge of the things he draws and thinks of them only in the plane of his paper, whereas your Lahore carpenter draughtsman sees the things he

34. ibid

is drawing as they actually are, and is therefore the man we have long wanted.[35]

The gradual unfolding of Kipling's philosophy of education, the growth of the School of Industrial Art to the Mayo School of Art and the life of Bhai Ram Singh, one of the first students of the school, are so intertwined that the rest of the story is best told as part of Ram Singh's own story of schooling and his rise to be the first native Principal of the Mayo School of Art.

35. Report of 1887-88



29

Portrait of Bhai Ram Singh painted in 1892 by Rudolph Swoboda, Austrian Court Artist to Queen Victoria; the portrait now hangs outside the entrance door to the Durbar Hall, Osborne House. Ram Singh, born 1st August 1858, was about 34 years old when this was painted.

The Raj and Bhai Ram Singh: Tradition in Change

Ram Singh was born to the Ramgarhia Sohal family in a village called Rasulpur, near Batala, District Gurdaspur. His father, Assa Singh, owned some land in the village but due to financial hardship moved to Amritsar.[1] Ram Singh's date of birth is stated to be 1st August 1858,[2] the year of the abolition of the East India Company's rule and a year after the great upheaval of 1857. The preceding decade (1847-57) had been a period of great turmoil in the Punjab, witnessing the end of Sikh rule, the uprising of the Indian troops of the British Army, and its brutal suppression, leading to the consolidation of British rule with Victoria as Queen and later as the Empress of India. Therefore it is not surprising that very little of the family record has survived.[3] As may be expected there are a number of tales, sometimes contradictory, about the family and the early expression of Ram Singh's genius. Mrs. Rani Sohal, widow of Ram Singh's grandson, insisted that Assa Singh was a landholder of significance, that Ram Singh was educated at the mission school and that the Queen adopted Ram Singh as her brother. The Encyclopedia of Sikhism[4] also, quite wrongly, states that Ram Singh

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1. This information, largely unsubstantiated due to lack of records of the period, was given to the authors during an interview in Amritsar, with the great-grandsons of Bhai Ram Singh (Sardar Mohan Singh, Executive Engineer, and Sardar Kulbir Singh), their mother (Mrs Rani Sohal) and wives (Mrs Kamaljit Sohal and Mrs Satinder Kaur), in March 2004.
2. The date may or may not be correct as no birth records were kept then in the towns of the Punjab, and a date of birth from memory was inscribed in official records at the time of entry to school. This date is according to the service record of Ram Singh.
3. The authors were able to see the records available with the family at Amritsar, which, unfortunately, have not been well-maintained. They were able to convince the family to set up a Bhai Ram Singh Archives Trust with the help of the Springdale Education Society run by the Sandhu family of Amritsar, who then agreed to lend the necessary financial and organizational support to the descendants of Bhai Ram Singh.
4. *Encyclopedia of Sikhism Vol. 111 (M-R)*, Harbans Singh, University of Patiala 1997, p 472

'attracted the notice of Mr. Kipling ... in Amritsar' when it is a known fact that Ram Singh was in Lahore before Kipling arrived to set up the Mayo School in Lahore. This lack of clarity continued, despite the fact that Ram Singh rose to be acclaimed at the highest level of colonial society, by the Queen-Empress herself.

The British Press noted the achievements of Bhai Ram Singh in highly flattering terms during the period 1891 to 1893, when he carried out the commissions for Queen Victoria in England. He was variously referred to as, 'Professor of Art' at Lahore,[5] 'the native artist',[6] 'Indian Artist', 'the Indian whom the Queen has commissioned',[7] 'distinguished subject of the Queen-Empress',[8] 'eminent Hindoo architect', 'Hindoo Architect',[9] 'An (sic) Hindoo from the School of Art, Lahore',[10] 'a native of the Punjab',[11] 'a noted freemason from Lahore',[12] 'a native architect',[13] 'the Indian artificer',[14] 'architect and designer... a noted carver'.[15] Despite all the attention Ram Singh generated, very little information was recorded about his early childhood, education or training. Only '*The Graphic*' in its issue of 29th October 1892, noted that he was 'born at Rasulpur in the district of Gurdaspur, in the year 1857, and was educated in the Mission School at Amritsar... met Mr. Harvey ... Col W. R. M. Holroyd ... Mr. Kipling'.

The most authentic information about Ram Singh's early life comes from the draft of a letter, surviving with his descendants, which he addressed to Sir William Mackworth Young, the Lt Governor of the Punjab (1897-1902) regarding his promotion as Principal, Mayo School of Arts. The draft, in Ram Singh's own handwriting, sheds light on his early life in the third and fourth paragraph of the

5. *The Daily Telegraph*, 31 December 1891, and *'Cassell's Saturday Journal'* (undated).
6. *The Star*, 24 February 1892.
7. *Modern Society*, 5 March 1892 and *The Evening News*, 30 June 1892
8. *The Daily Telegraph*, 2 August 1892.
9. *The St John's Wood, Kilburn, and Hampstead Advertiser*, 25 August 1892 and *The Gentlewomen*, 27 August 1892.
10. *Salas's Journal*, 3 September 1892.
11. *The Graphic*, 29 October 1892
12. *Forget-Me-Not*, 31 December1892.
13. *The Daily Telegraph* 3 January 1893.
14. *The Evening Standard* 7 January 1893.
15. *The Sun* (undated)

letter. He wrote, in August 1899, 'Please permit me, Dear Governor, to thrust it on your Honour's particular attention that Mr. John Harvey first picked me up; and it was upon his prophetic wishes that I joined the Mayo School of Art in 1875... Before that when your Honour was at Amritsar as Deputy Commissioner I repaired and polished Lady Young's Piano and my work was approved even then. ...'[16]

The Deputy Commissioner of a district in British India was a person of great authority and stature. If a piano had to be repaired and polished, and that too belonging to the mem-sahib, only a person of great skill would have been asked to do the task. It is, thus, clear that Ram Singh, had acquired the required skills by the young age of sixteen. What is equally evident is that he could only have learnt the skills as an apprentice in his family's traditional business. The Ramgarhia Misl of the Sikhs has a long-standing tradition of being master craftsmen, specializing in carpentry. In all probability Assa Singh, Ram Singh's father, shifted to Amritsar, locating himself in or near the timber market, where carpenter-shops were also situated. The timber market, locally called the *Cheel-Mandi*, catered to the furniture requirements of the city residents. Young boys of the family grew up watching the elders at work or apprenticing with the senior artisans in the *bradri*[17] and naturally adopted the family trade. It is not clear whether young Ram Singh had any early formal schooling, however, he might have picked up some smattering of the English language in his interaction with the British missionaries and officials and come to the notice of John Harvey.

John Harvey,[18] (1847-1926) son of Lt Col Gardiner Harvey, was born in Bangalore, sent for education to Ireland and returned to India in 1868, carrying letters of introduction, which procured

16. Draft letter dated August 1899 from Bhai Ram Singh to Lt Governor of the Punjab, Sir William Mackworth Young

17. *Bradri*: extended family, more in the nature of a clan.

18. Information about Mr Harvey from his great, granddaughter Susan Perrett of Australia is gratefully acknowledged.

him, from Major (later Lieutenant Colonel) Holroyd, Director of Public Instruction in the Punjab, a post as assistant school master in the Delhi School. Later he became second master at Government School, Amritsar and Officiating Assistant Inspector of Schools, Lahore Circle. The Director of Public Instruction in his report of 1874-75 wrote, 'In January 1874 a School of Carpentry was opened in Lahore… I am indebted to Mr. Harvey the Officiating Inspector, Lahore Circle, for his assistance in superintending this school.' Holroyd and Harvey sought promising students for the school and thus Harvey, in Ram Singh's words, 'picked' him and he, Ram Singh, arrived in Lahore in 1874. Harvey was a regular visitor to Rev Samuel Hasell in Amritsar, whose daughter he later married on the first day of January 1876, and he may have heard about Ram Singh's expertise from the wife of the Deputy Commissioner herself. Ram Singh has himself, thus, left a record of his selection and enrolment in the Lahore School of Carpentry in 1874.

Ram Singh first appears in records as one of the students of the Lahore School of Carpentry[19] established through private subscription, with classes held in the veranda of the Director of Public Instruction's office.[20] It had a somewhat short history. The School, with a head workman in charge, was meant to be self-supporting out of revenues generated through commissions from the departments of the Government. However, within the first two years, the Director of Public Instruction lamented that because of 'remissness in the execution of orders, which caused great injury to the financial prospects of the school',[21] it did not do as well as was expected and its future prospects were still under consideration. Upon the establishment of the Mayo School of Industrial Arts in 1875, the carpentry school was incorporated into the new school with twenty of its students 'brought on roll' at the Mayo School.[22]

19. Report on Popular Education in the Punjab & its Dependencies for 1874-75

20. Report on Popular Education in the Punjab & its Dependencies for 1875-1876.

21. ibid

22. Report on Popular Education in the Punjab & its Dependencies for 1876-1877

Ram Singh, along with the other students who came from the School of Carpentry, started attending classes for a few hours daily at the Mayo School, located in a house in Anarkali behind the Bengal Bank.[23] In addition to drawing classes, the students were given elementary instruction in reading and writing the vernacular and in arithmetic. The shift to the capital city of the Punjab from essentially a smaller town and the basic education he received, not to mention his frequent interaction with the British, expanded Ram Singh's horizons. Thus, in addition to being well-trained as a carpenter, Ram Singh began to develop his conceptual and intellectual capacities and outgrew his crafts-training to achieve a deeper understanding of other arts and architecture. Ram Singh's talents could not remain unnoticed for long. Principal Kipling mentioned him in his first report (1875-76) to the Department of Public Instruction and wrote, 'Amongst the most promising students may be mentioned Muhammad Din the son of an engraver, Ram Singh of the School of Carpentry, Sher Muhammad a Luhar, and Edwin Holden'.[24] He further added that 'Ram Singh from the School of Carpentry gives promise of becoming a very capable draughtsman and designer in his own craft, and he will be… a valuable assistant to an architect.'[25] In the British construct of colonial India it was indeed the highest that a native could aspire to be, an assistant to a colonial official, and Ram Singh was thus poised to develop beyond carpentry into architecture. It is to the credit of Kipling that a growing respect for Ram Singh crept into his subsequent reports, and that he developed sufficient faith and confidence in the young Ram Singh to provide him with opportunities and challenges for carrying out original work.

Throughout his stay at the Mayo School, Ram Singh continued to maintain strong links with his family and *bradri* of carpenters in Amritsar, drew upon them for cultural sustenance and support, and often involved them in the work executed by the Mayo School.

23. J.L. Kipling & Thornton, *Lahore As it Was*, page 58

24. Report on Popular Education in the Punjab & its Dependencies for 1875-76

25. ibid

After his retirement from the Mayo School of Arts in October 1913, the pull of his strong roots reasserted itself and Ram Singh returned to Amritsar and established his practice at the Mahan Singh Gate, Cheel-Mandi of the walled city portion of his hometown. His descendants still live there.

The First Eight years at the Mayo School of Art

In the early period, the number of years required to finish the Mayo School program was not rigorously defined. Some students left when their elders decided they needed help in the family business, while others continued with formal training and learning till they achieved the level required to be gainfully employed. The more competent were engaged in the commission work carried out by the School, for which a system of honoraria had been put into place;[26] the best among them, Ram Singh and Sher Muhammad, may also have assisted in the teaching of the junior students. Ram Singh remained a student for eight years, when he was made Assistant Drawing Master, a non-gazetted appointment, at twenty five years of age, on April 1, 1883. Henceforth he was respectfully addressed as Bhai[27] Ram Singh, in the official records.[28] Sher Muhammad was also appointed as Assistant Drawing Master (non-gazetted) on the same date. Ram Singh rose to be the Principal while Sher Muhammad retired as the Vice Principal.[29]

Students at the Mayo School of Industrial Arts were trained through three different methods. The first was formal classroom instruction and training in the particular craft in which the Principal felt that the student had the greatest potential; the second was participation in the production of the commission work that the school received through the Government or sometimes, private

26. Report on Popular Education in the Punjab & its Dependencies for 1879-80
27. *Bhai* is an honorific title among the Sikhs
28. Report on Popular Education in the Punjab & its Dependencies for 1892-93
29. Sher Muhammad (1861-1924); Khan Bahadur; Assistant Drawing Master (1883-1909); Drawing Master (1909-1910) Assistant Vice-Principal (1910-1913) Vice-Principal (1913-1916);*History of Services, Gazetted Officers, Punjab*, Compiled in the Office of the Accountant-General Punjab

sources; the third, was through participation in various exhibitions that were held in India and abroad. Kipling viewed the School more as an atelier, since he felt that 'It is only in the atelier that the real power of a student can be justly tested and all the art training establishments of Europe are acknowledging the truth of this in their practice'.[30] Ram Singh, therefore, from the beginning of his student days, had opportunities to participate in practical work, and several of the projects carried out by the School were later acknowledged to be his work. The Memorandum, published when he was conferred membership of the Victorian Order (MVO), on 12 December 1911, mentions four works done by Ram Singh while still a student at the School viz., the design of 'the old building of the School under the direction of Mr. Kipling;'(1881) the design of 'a show case for the Melbourne Exhibition after the Indian style which received a certificate and medal,' (1880-81) a design of 'sideboards for the International Exhibition at Calcutta - received certificate and medal' (1883) and 'Furniture for the Punjab Exhibition for which (he) received two first prizes of Rs. 25 each'. (1881-82).

In his report of 1876, Kipling wrote that the senior class, wherein Ram Singh was a student, was educated through the study of Indian design from objects in the museum and from photographs, books and drawings. Also they were given lessons in geometry and drawing of foliage from nature and were instructed in preparing original designs.[31] Ram Singh's early training revolved around the study of local architecture and decorative ornamental details, which Kipling viewed as being '... in the highest degree desirable,' and 'that more attention should be paid to the systematic study of Oriental Architecture, the source and fountain-head of all the Indian Arts.'[32] Understanding local architecture through detailed measured drawings of the plans, elevations and the intricate details of the rich architecture, was the basis of the teaching methods at the School.

30. Proposed Plan for the organisation of Mayo School of Arts from J. L. Kipling, Principal, Lahore School of Art, to the Secretary to the Government, Punjab. Dated 27 May 1875

31. Report on Popular Education in the Punjab & its Dependencies, 1876-77

32. Report on Popular Education in the Punjab & its Dependencies, 1879-80

The students were then asked to develop their own designs, and were trained to prepare working drawings of the same. In the case of furniture making, they were required to fully understand the construction involved before cutting the wood.[33]

This integration of theory and practice, study of extant Indian heritage and participation in practical work, was the cornerstone of Kipling's philosophy of art education. The practical work it is clear, was what was required by the British rulers, whether for their immediate needs of furniture, or the development of a style of architecture that reflected the European views of design. Kipling recognized the advantages of the apprenticeship system of learning in India and believed that practice and theory should be integrated through living examples. The 'apprenticeship system' was based on traditional values and the 'living examples' were the then modern needs of the rulers. In his report for the year 1876-77 Kipling wrote 'It is not perhaps to be desired that the energies of an educational institution should be wholly absorbed in production, but I am convinced that the intelligence and powers of the students are more fully brought out by a demand for some special design for a given purpose. Happily in this country they have not hitherto been dissociated from practice.'[34] It is at this level that Kipling brought together the modern forces and tradition-based talent, which led to the fusion of the east and the west in the buildings designed by Bhai Ram Singh.

Students were encouraged to spend time outside the regular school hours in the study of examples of Indian design, thus, Ram Singh spent his first summer vacations of 1875 in Amritsar, collecting paper casts from old wood carvings, which he used in the design of details for the ornamental parts of a drawing room desk.[35] He was unable to complete the task in the year 1875 due to illness, but by 1876 the design was completed and appreciated by the

33. Report on Popular Education in the Punjab & its Dependencies, 1877-78

34. Report, 1876-77, op cit

35. Report, 1875-76. op cit

Principal.[36] On another occasion he made sketches of the marble inlay work of the Golden Temple. Working during vacation or leisure time, preparing measured drawings of various buildings became a learning and profitable process for the students.

Along with the regular courses at the School, the senior students, including Ram Singh, were involved with commission work given to the School by the Government of India. One of the earliest assignments was for a series of banners emblazoned with the arms of the Princes and Chiefs of India and of Governors, Lieutenant-Governors, and the Commander-in-Chief of the Imperial assemblage at Delhi of 1877, held to mark the proclamation of Queen Victoria as Empress of India. While the students developed and enlarged the design from sketches provided by Kipling, a large number of embroiderers in silk, silver and gold were engaged to produce the work. The design involved mythological figures with Indian Arabesque, as in the case of the Viceroy's banner, designed by one of the students, Muhammad Din.[37] Thus, the lesson of associating with local craftsmen and amalgamating local motifs and imported designs/imagery was already being explored at this early stage and would bear fruit in the subsequent work of Ram Singh. The practical aspects of the assignment were taken to its logical end, and the students accompanied the Principal to Delhi to install the banners at the venue. The work was assiduously done, and the School received recognition from the Government which opened up possibilities of further work.

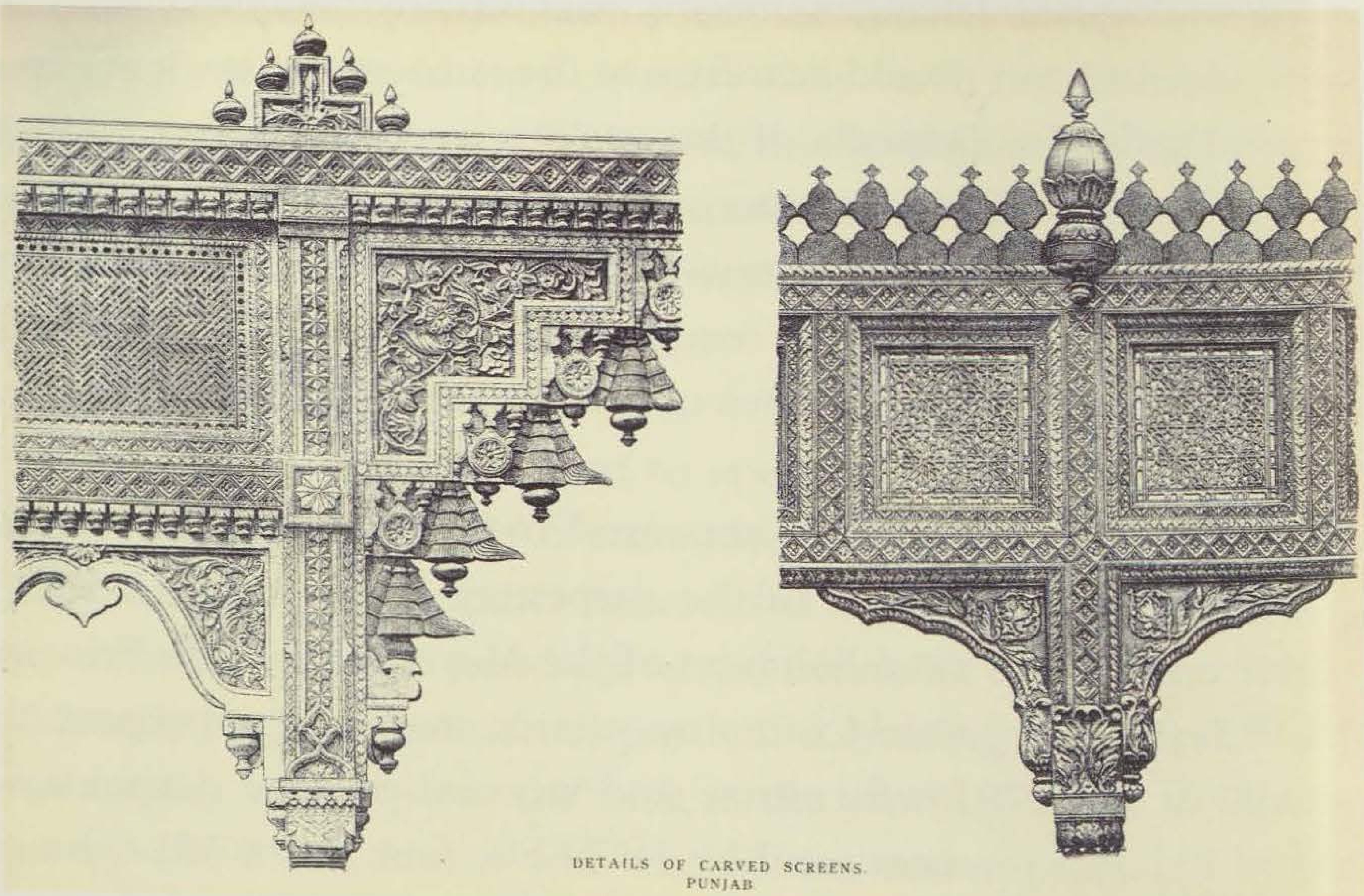
There appeared to be no dearth of commission work for the youths of the carpentry class and by 1877, two years after the establishment of the Mayo School, the Principal contemplated the need to employ outside workmen to prepare all the orders received for furniture and woodwork. The carpentry class benefited the most, and by 1879-80, four years after the establishment of the

36. Reports, 1875-76 & 1876-77 op cit

37. Ibid

Mayo School, furniture was being supplied to Government establishments such as the Government College, and the Punjab Club; various private orders were also undertaken.[38] Furniture was also prepared for national and an international exhibition, the Melbourne International Exhibition of 1880-81, and the Principal reported a small though respectable earning that the School was now making and the need to give a small honoraria to the students 'as a stimulus to exertion'.[39] Ram Singh, the star student of the carpentry class, having learnt the trade through tutelage in his family business, may have been responsible for the School having done so well in carpentry at such an early stage. Substantial work of the early period was assigned to him and mentioned in the MVO Memorandum.

Exhibitions displaying the Arts and Crafts of the Punjab, were held in different parts of India, to which the Mayo School sent exhibits of students' and teachers' works. These exhibitions provided a forum in which the School could showcase its work and its 'distinct and decided method of working in oriental styles of art'.[40] The Simla



30

Detail of Carved Screen Punjab- The Colonial and Indian Exhibition of 1886 *Journal of Indian Art* August 1886, (No 14)

The Exhibition meant to showcase the handicrafts of the Indian Empire had courts assigned to various provinces. Thus Madras, Bombay, Punjab, Jaipur all had separate courts, occupying substantial area. The Punjab Court had two arcades, (100' each) and 4 end arcades, of 3 arches each (12'6" each). The screen for the Punjab Court was designed at the Mayo School and distributed to various craftsmen. The end arcades were made at Amritsar by Ram Singh, Kirpa Singh, Lena Singh and others, all from the Mayo School; the long arcades were made at Udoki and Lahore by Sikh carpenters.

38. Report, 1879-80 op cit

39. ibid

40. Report on the State of Education, 1881-82; Extract from the Report of the Principal, School of Art, Lahore

Art exhibition of 1876-77 was the first such occasion, in which the students exhibited drawings and "original design", prepared under Kipling's directions, and these were well received.[41] It became a routine activity for the School to send works of the students and the staff to exhibitions held both within India and overseas and Ram Singh made significant contributions towards all such endeavors.The Punjab Exhibition of 1881-82 provided an opportunity for the School to show 'more completely and clearly than it would be possible to express in words what we have been trying to do, and how far we have succeeded in doing it.'[42] Ram Singh prepared furniture items for which he received two first prizes of Rs 25 each, worthy enough to receive mention in the MVO Memorandum. Baden-Powell commenting on the wood cravings, furniture and other exhibits shown at the Exhibition wrote '...according to the excellent method pursued in the school, the pupils are led by illustration and suggestion to devise for themselves the full design, and to work out the plan of structure and decoration. But still the pupils represent a taught class of men with advantages of modern appliances, books of reference, and models, as well as continuous supervision and guidance, which places them on a footing altogether different from that of the ordinary town or village carpenters'.[43]

A number of students exhibited their work and won awards at the Simla Exhibition of 1881. Amir Bakhsh was awarded the Patiala prize for a water-colour picture of the Wazir Khan mosque and Karpal Singh received the first prize of Rs 50 in the competition for a design for a reading-room and library for Dera Ismail Khan. Drawings of Ram Singh, although exhibited, did not win an award, however Kipling found that 'they were at least equal in merit to the accepted design'.[44] The Melbourne International Exhibition of 1880-81[45] was yet another occasion for the school to showcase its work. Carpentry was the strongest craft, due to Ram Singh's

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41. Report, 1876-77 op cit
42. Report, 1881-82 op cit
43. ibid
44. Report on the State of Education, 1882-83, Appendix A, Report of The Principal, School of Art, Lahore.
45. International Exhibition of Arts, Manufactures and Agricultural and Industrial products from all Nations; Melbourne Australia, 1880-81.

expertise, it was therefore in order, that the carpentry class was asked to prepare 'a large and elaborately carven show case'.[46] Since time was short, wood carvers of Amritsar were engaged to assist the School in completing this elaborate piece of furniture. A certificate and medal was awarded to the School for this exhibit. The showcase was later listed as one of the works of Bhai Ram Singh in the MVO Memorandum.

Through the years 1882 and 1883, the School was fully engrossed with preparations for the Calcutta International Exhibition of 1883-84. Apart from the contributions that were being prepared by the School itself, 'the whole of the Punjab contributions passed through the School of Art.'[47] The Principal had to devote a large part of his time to organizing and selecting the Punjab contribution and even had to absent himself during the months of November and December 1883; therefore the schoolwork could not be carried on as planned. To complete the tasks the School holidays had to be curtailed to one month[48] and the School reopened in September instead of October. In April 1883, while work for the Calcutta Exhibition was still underway, both Ram Singh and Sher Muhammad were inducted as Assistant Teachers at the School, thus Kipling now had the advantage of relying on his newly inducted Assistant Teachers, to share his school work, which they did to his satisfaction. 'They have worked well, and have justified the anticipations expressed when their appointment was mooted,'[49] reported the Principal.

The prized exhibit by the School was a 144 foot frieze in tempera on brown paper, 'in the style of the fresco painting in Wazir Khan's mosque',[50] with the names of the thirty-two districts of the Punjab, prepared by the senior students. Other exhibits included a model of the armorial bearings of the Punjab in relief and molded in paper heraldically colored and gilded; there were also inlaid boxes, an inlaid and carved cabinet, painted sideboard, a lacquered couch

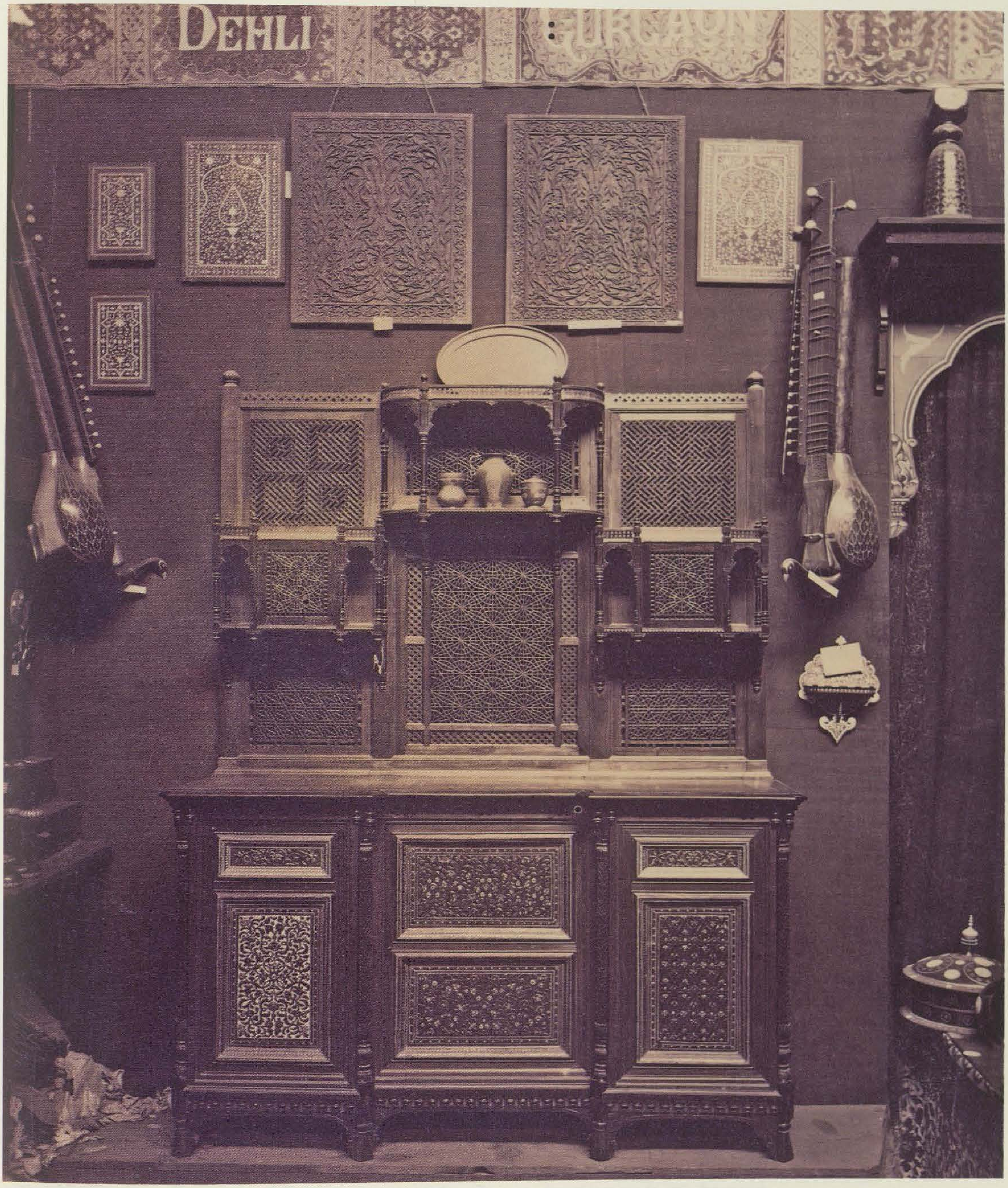
46. Report, 1879-80 op cit

47. Report on Popular Education in the Punjab & its Dependencies 1883-84, Appendix D Report on the Mayo School of Art , Lahore

48. ibid

49. ibid

50. ibid



32

Side Board Inlaid and Carved,

Calcutta International Exhibition 1883-84

Photograph National College of Arts Archives

Calcutta International Exhibition, Punjab Court,

Photographic Office, Survey of India Department

31

Stand in Walnut with Pinjra Work –Calcutta International Exhibition 1883-84

Photograph National College of Arts Archives



STAND IN WALNUT WITH PINJRA WORK
(CALCUTTA EXHIBITION 1883-84)
RAM SINGH (HEAD MISTRI), MAYO SCHOOL OF ARTS

and bracket, and drawing-room chairs. The students also prepared colored architectural drawings, principally of the *Kashi* decorated buildings in or near Lahore for which they were awarded a certificate of the first class and a silver medal, while the School was awarded the second-class certificates and a bronze medal. Ram Singh exhibited a sideboard and painted hanging *etageres* and was awarded a certificate and medal for the sideboard, while Kipling along with Gervaise Pinto, modeler to the school, exhibited busts for which Kipling was also awarded a certificate of the first-class and a silver medal. Commenting on the sideboard, Kipling wrote, 'I frequently heard it described as the best piece of Indian furniture in the exhibition.'[51]

51. ibid

Kipling took Ram Singh, Sher Muhammad, Amir Bakhsh, and the School clerk, Dhanpat Rai to set up the exhibition in Calcutta. At the opening of the exhibition by the Viceroy, Lord Ripon, in December 1883, Lockwood Kipling was presented to the Duke and Duchess of Connaught,[52] who had recently arrived in India. This was an opportune meeting, for the royal couple was to later play an important role in the School and Ram Singh's professional life. On the day following the opening, Kipling accompanied the royal couple on a visit to the exhibition. Kipling used the opportunity to show the sizeable contribution on display from the School. The Connaughts may already have been somewhat familiar with the work of the School, since it had earlier undertaken a commission for Messrs Phelps and Co to make a model of the arms of the Duke, which were 'about four feet six inches on its greatest length',[53] and copies of which were to be cast in cement and heraldically colored and gilded for the Connaught residences at Simla, Lahore and Calcutta.[54] However, Kipling must have impressed the Duke and his wife sufficiently to have them visit the Mayo School of Arts in the autumn of 1884.

Kipling clearly also attempted to reach out to the craftsmen in the field. While enumerating the benefits of participation in exhibitions he wrote, 'The influence of this work has undoubtedly been felt outside the school and the Exhibition, besides showing a distinct and decided method of working in oriental styles of art, was of use to the large number of craftsmen who came up and were carefully directed to our attempts to produce new and carefully considered designs on old and familiar lines.'[55] During these early years, the School actively pursued and sought opportunities to expose students to various examples of the rich architecture of India. In 1879-80, one student of the carpentry class, probably Ram Singh, was placed at the disposal of Captain Cole of the Royal Engineers, where he

52. The Duke of Connaught was the third son of Victoria

53. Report 1883-84 op cit

54. ibid

55. Report 1881-82, op cit Appendix A, Extract from the Report of the Principal, School of Art, Lahore

was engaged in making plans and elevations of the buildings in and about Lahore, to be used in the restoration and preservation work of the ancient architecture of India. Captain Cole, later proposed to the Secretary of State for India, that the Mayo School should be associated with his office, in a study of the 'painted and ceramic decoration of the characteristic Lahore architecture, and in such restoration as may be considered desirable.'[56]

On another occasion, when Kipling was made the Chairman of the Committee of Jurors for the Jeypore Exhibition of 1882, he requested the Maharaja of Amber to allow his students to make drawings of the architecture and ornamental details of the Old Palace at Amber. Nearly a hundred drawings and tracings of marble tracery, carving, plasterwork, perforated windows and other details were thus prepared.[57] Kipling mentions that this was the first time that permission was given 'to sketch in this interesting palace, which is rich in decorative details'.[58] The same year (1882), the School provided a collection of about thirty measured drawings to Casper Purdon Clarke,[59] an architect and director of the India Museum, South Kensington, which included drawings of two richly-carved houses of Lahore with full details, as well as plans of a typical native house in the Punjab, besides drawings of doors, gateways, arcades, and other details measured and drawn from existing buildings. These drawings were added to the India Museum Collection. Commenting on this work, Kipling wrote, 'I know of no practice so instructive as that of studying existing architecture and ornament than by carefully drawing it,'[60] and expected that the School would get more opportunities to make reproductions of the good old work in Lahore and its surrounds. By 1883, Kipling was appointed editor of the Journal of Indian Art and Industry,[61] the first issue of which was published in January 1884. The journal

56. Report, 1879-80 op cit

57. Report, 1882-83; op cit

58. ibid

59. Casper Purdon Clarke, 1846-1911, born at Richmond, Ireland died London, practicing architect, lectured extensively on arts and architecture, Keeper of Indian Section at V & A Museum, appointed Director V&A Museum, 1905.

60. Report, 1882-83 op cit.

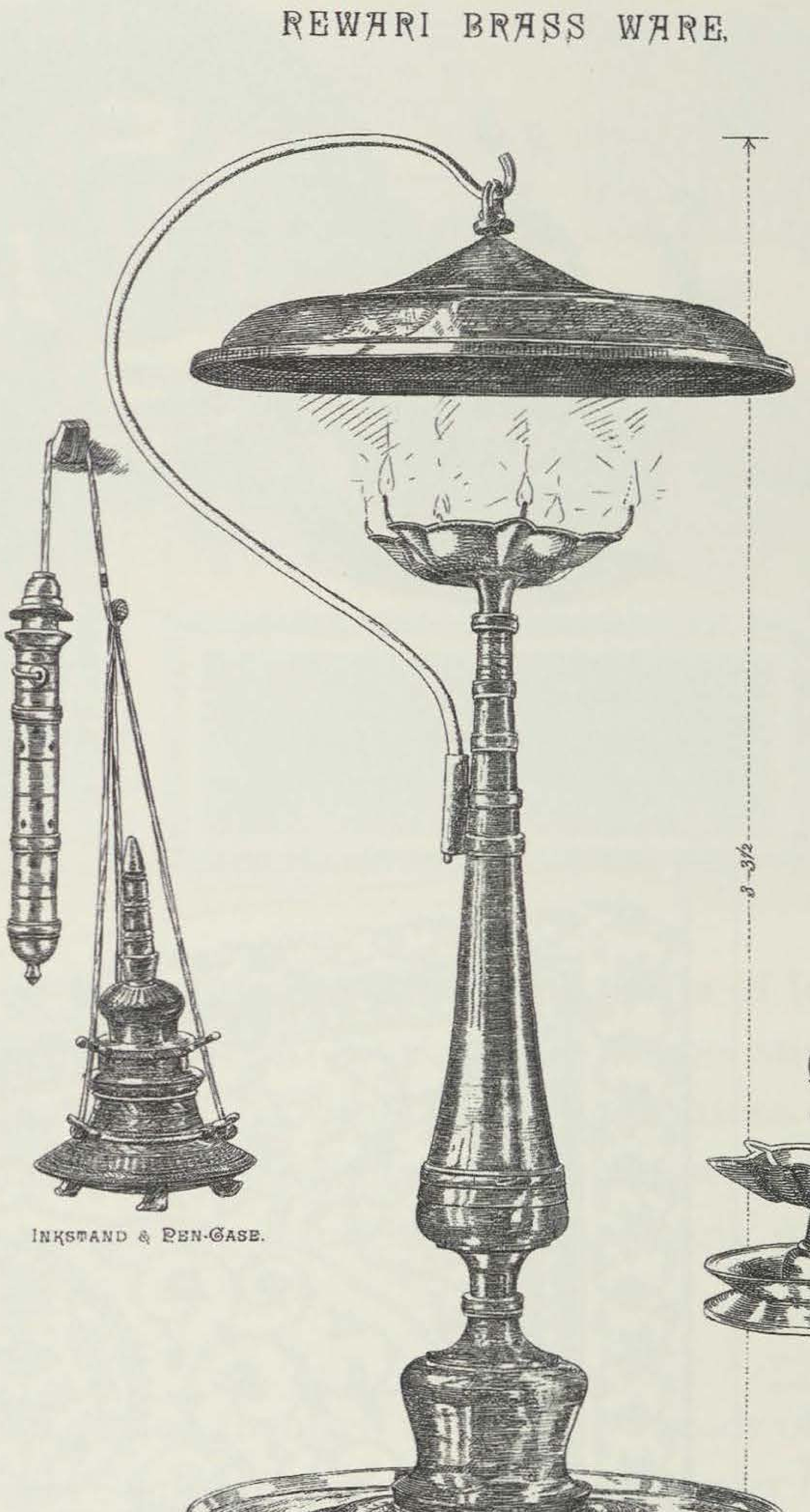
61. The *Journal of Indian Art & Industry* was published regularly as a quarterly from 1883, the title was later changed to the *Journal of Indian Art*. Kipling was the editor from 1883 to1886.

33

Rewhri Brass Work, *Journal of Indian Art January 1884. (No 1)- Plate II.*

J.L. Kipling's article "The Brass and Copper Ware of the Punjab and Cashmere" was illustrated with 11 plates, all done at the Mayo School of Art, 3 each by Ram Singh and Sher Muhammad. Each had an explanation Note.

J.L. Kipling was editor of the journal from January 1884 to April 1886.



Rewhri Brassware

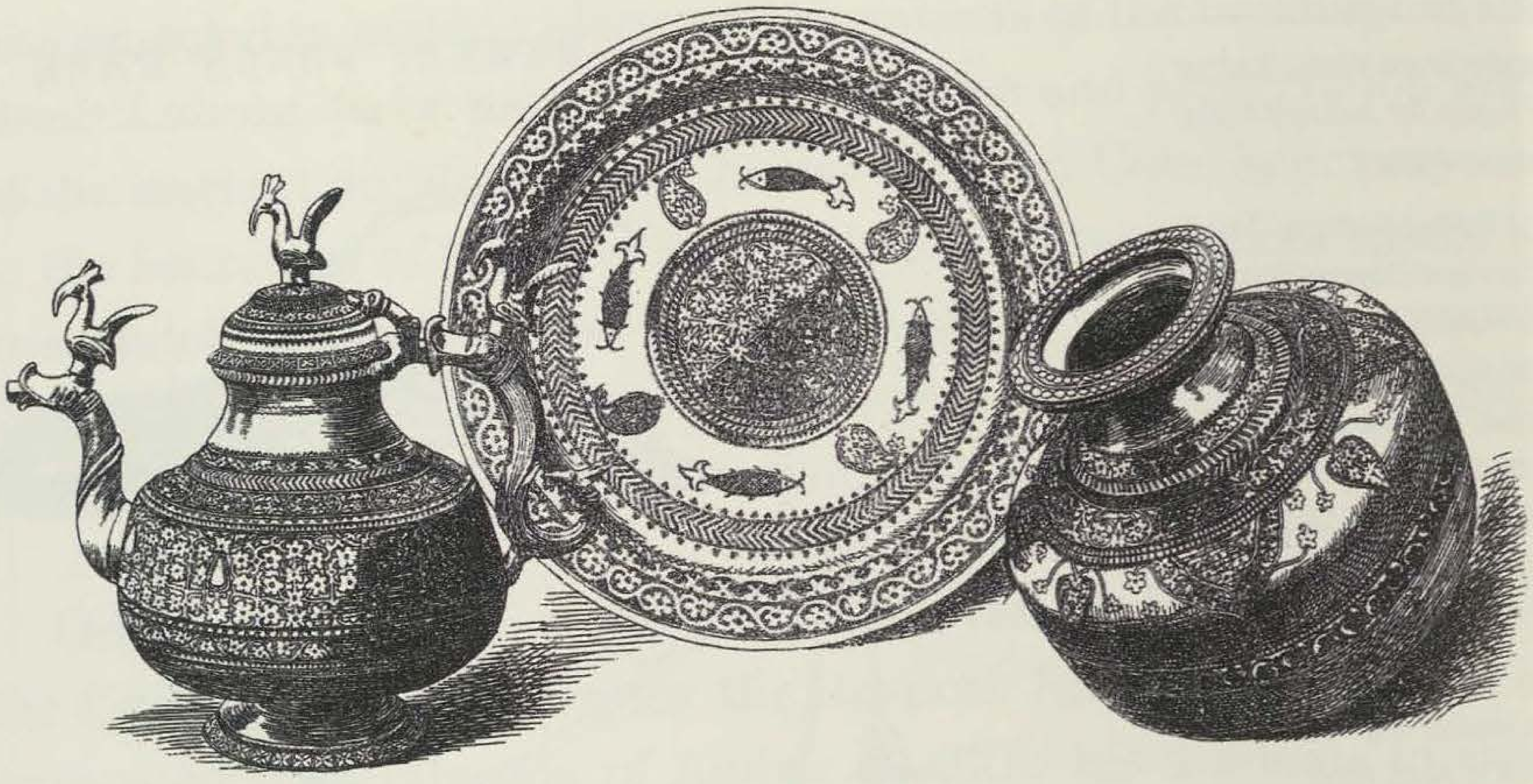
The center object is a Shamdan or lamp: on the left is an inkstand and pen-case: on the opposite side is a zang or cart bell: and below a hanging lamp of the kind commonly used in shops and houses. These are examples of the ordinary work produced at Rewhari, in the Gurgaon district, a town which has some reputation for brass ware.

Ram Singh del: J. L. Kipling dir:
W Griggs, photo-lith, London, S.E.

34

Hindu Brass Vessels, *Journal of Indian Art January 1884. (No 1).*

Explanation Note : " These are from the village of Pind Dadankhan, near Jhelum and though of the ordinary form show somewhat unusual skill in their decoration. The *gangasagar* water ewer is ornamented with grotesque birds and the *thali* or dish with fishes punched and graven. The *gagar* is of the form usually carried on the head to the well. The price of the water ewer is Rs7-8, of the dish Rs 4-2 and the water vessel Rs 11. These prices are regulated by weight and a percentage per seer is added for the graven work."



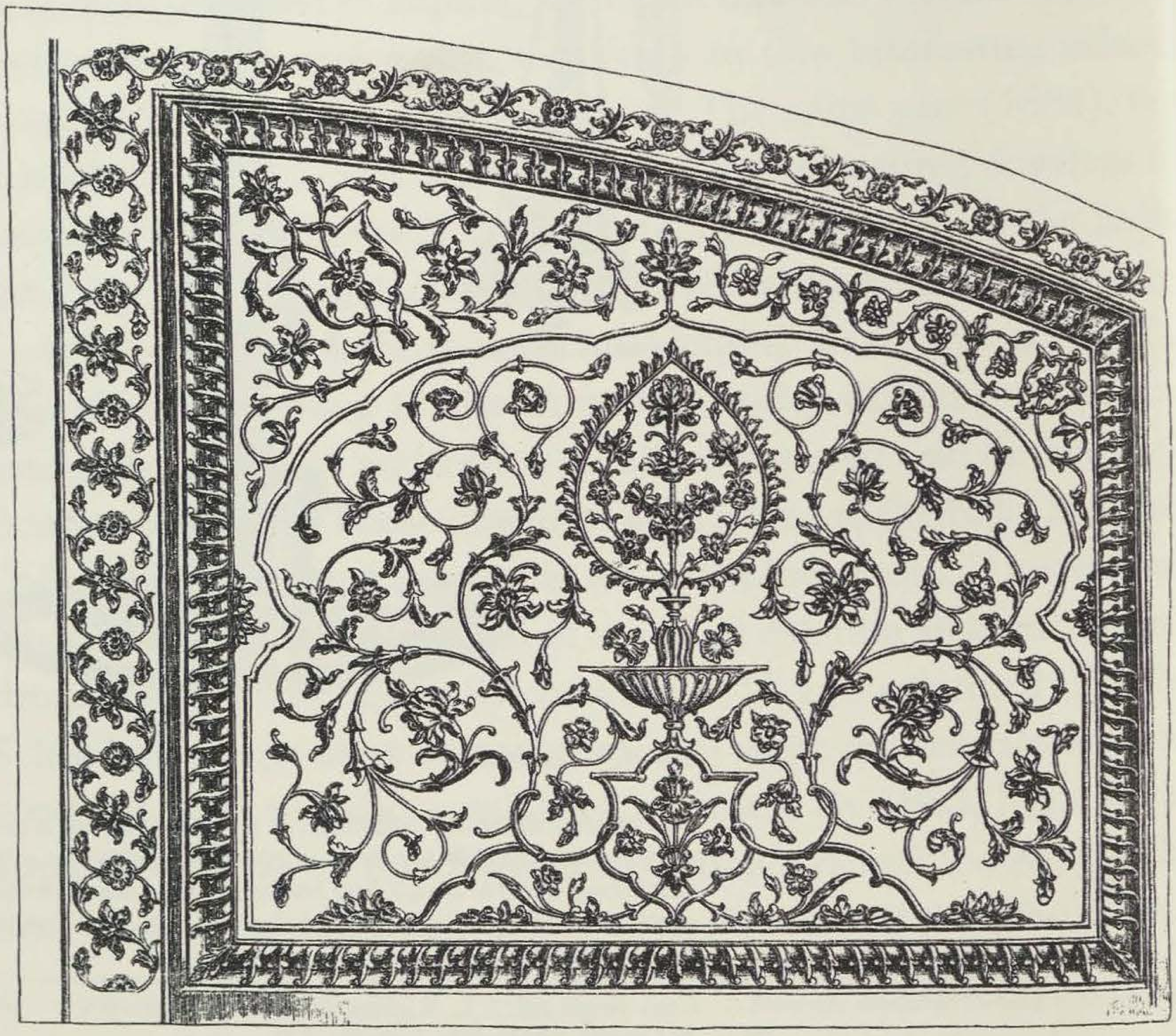
HINDU BRASS VESSELS

Ram Singh del: J. L. Kipling dir:
W Griggs, photo-lith, London, S.E.

35

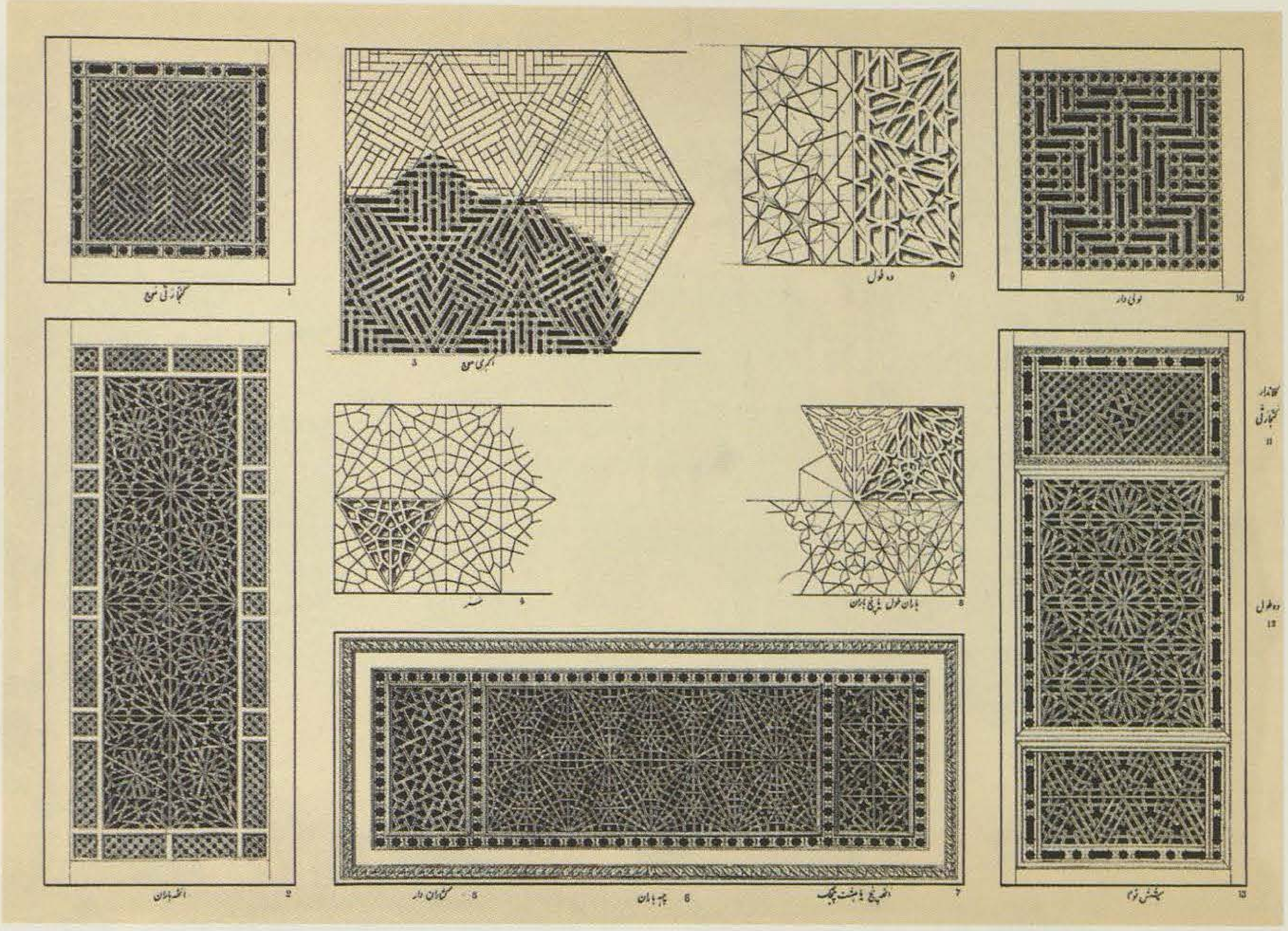
Embossed Copper Sikh Work, *Journal of Indian Art January 1884. (No 1).*

Explanation Note : " This plate in beaten work in copper was wrought for the decoration of the Durbar Sahib (Golden Temple) at Amritsar, which is now being clothed within as without in embossed work. The workman is a Sikh, and the design is a fair example of modern Sikh arabesque. The length of the plate is 3 feet 3 inches, and its greatest height 3 feet. The price is Rs 25."



EMBOSSED COPPER SIKH WORK

Ram Singh del: J. L. Kipling dir:
W Griggs, photo-lith, London, S.E.



36

Pinjra or Geometric lattice Work, *Journal of Indian Art, October 1884. (No 4) Plate 5 :*
Drawing among 8 to illustrate an article by J.L. Kipling " Punjab Wood Carving" 2 delineated by Ram Singh and 3 by Sher Muhammad.

Ram Singh
del.
J. L. Kipling
dir.

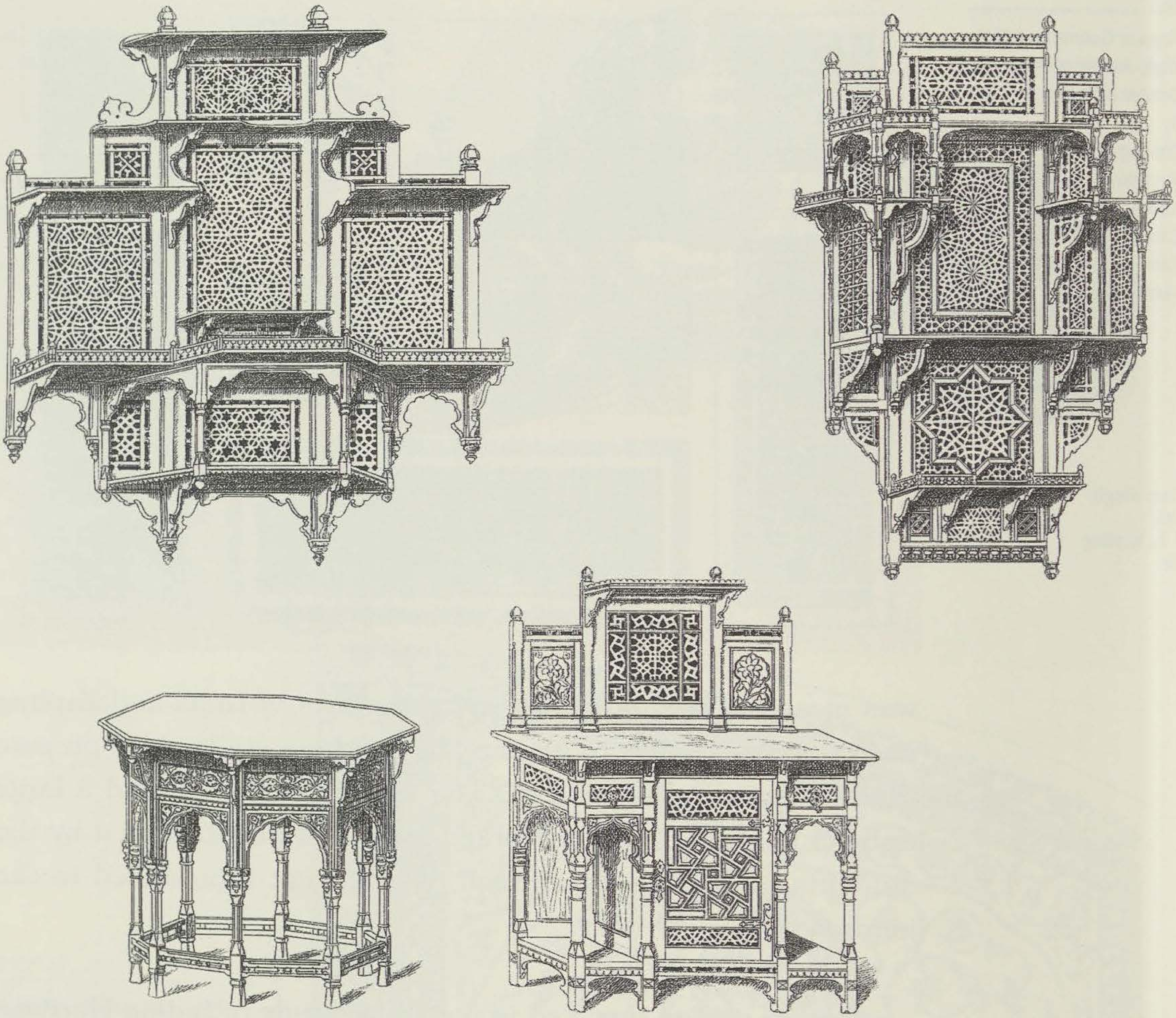
was meant to popularize the art and crafts of India and Kipling used the opportunity to get the Mayo School students to prepare illustrations for the journal. The illustrations spanned a large number of subjects and several drawings were delineated by the students, including Ram Singh, which were reproduced in the journal.

Another person involved in the active study of Indian Heritage was Colonel Samuel Swinton Jacob[62] engineer to Jeypore State. In 1890, Col Jacob published the *Jeypore Portfolios*, drawn by the students of the Jeypore School of Art and the Public Works Department of Jeypore, with the aim stated in the preface, to produce 'a collection of architectural details in such a shape as would be of practical use to the architect and the artisan'.[63]

The study of traditions of Indian architecture and ornamentation,

62. Col Samuel Swinton Jacob, Chief Engineer Jeypore State from 1867-1911, architect of St. Stephens College, Delhi (1891) Bikaner Palace, Lallgarh, Bikaner (1902) Bikaner House, Bikaner (1893), Daly College, Indore (1912) Umed Bhawan Palace (1909), Victoria Memorial Hall, Peshawar. Co-winner with Bhai Ram Singh of the design of the Main Block of Punjab Chief's College (1886)

63. Preface , Jeypore Portfolio of Architectural Details, London 1890-93

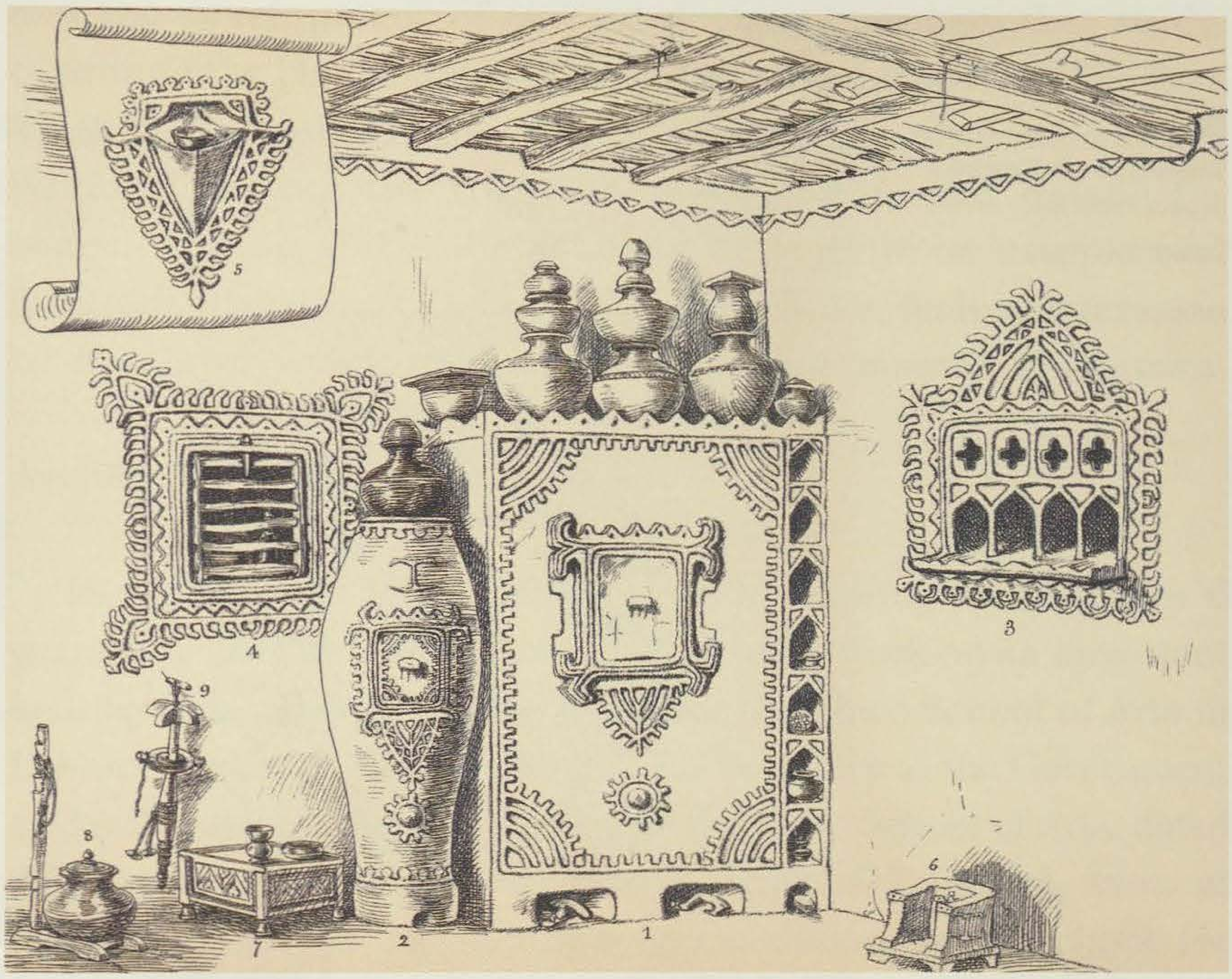


37

Pinjra or Geometric lattice Work– *Journal of Indian Art, October 1884. (No 4) Plate 9*

Drawing among 8 to illustrate an article by J.L. Kipling " Punjab Wood Carving" 2 delineated by Ram Singh and 3 by Sher Muhammad.

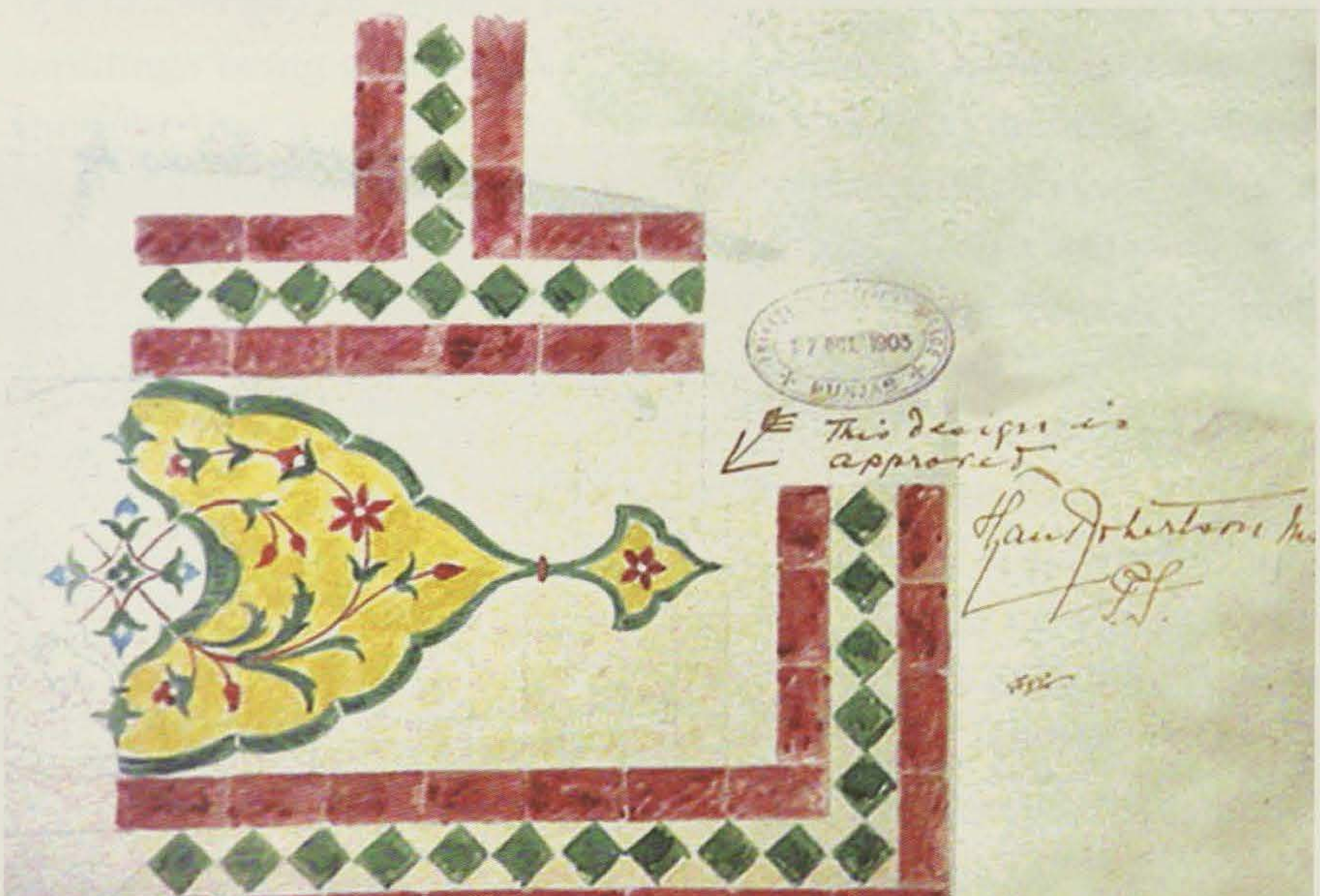
Kipling writes that "It is to be regretted that at present it is only in unimportant articles of this sort that the bulk of the public, and especially the Anglo-Indian public is interested." And goes on " the best use to which this and other varieties of Punjab woodwork ....can be put is undoubtedly in the larger and bolder forms of domestic architecture."



38

Rustic ornament – Punjab House Ornament, *Journal of Indian Art October 1884 (No 4) Plate 8,*

The drawing delineated by Bhai Ram Singh illustrated a short article by J.L. Kipling " Rustic Ornament-1" which explained the numbered items in the drawing 1) Kothi a corn store, 2) a Parowla a grain store, 3) Ala, or Bukhari shelf and cupboard 4) milk cupboard 5) Dawakha or lamp bracket



39

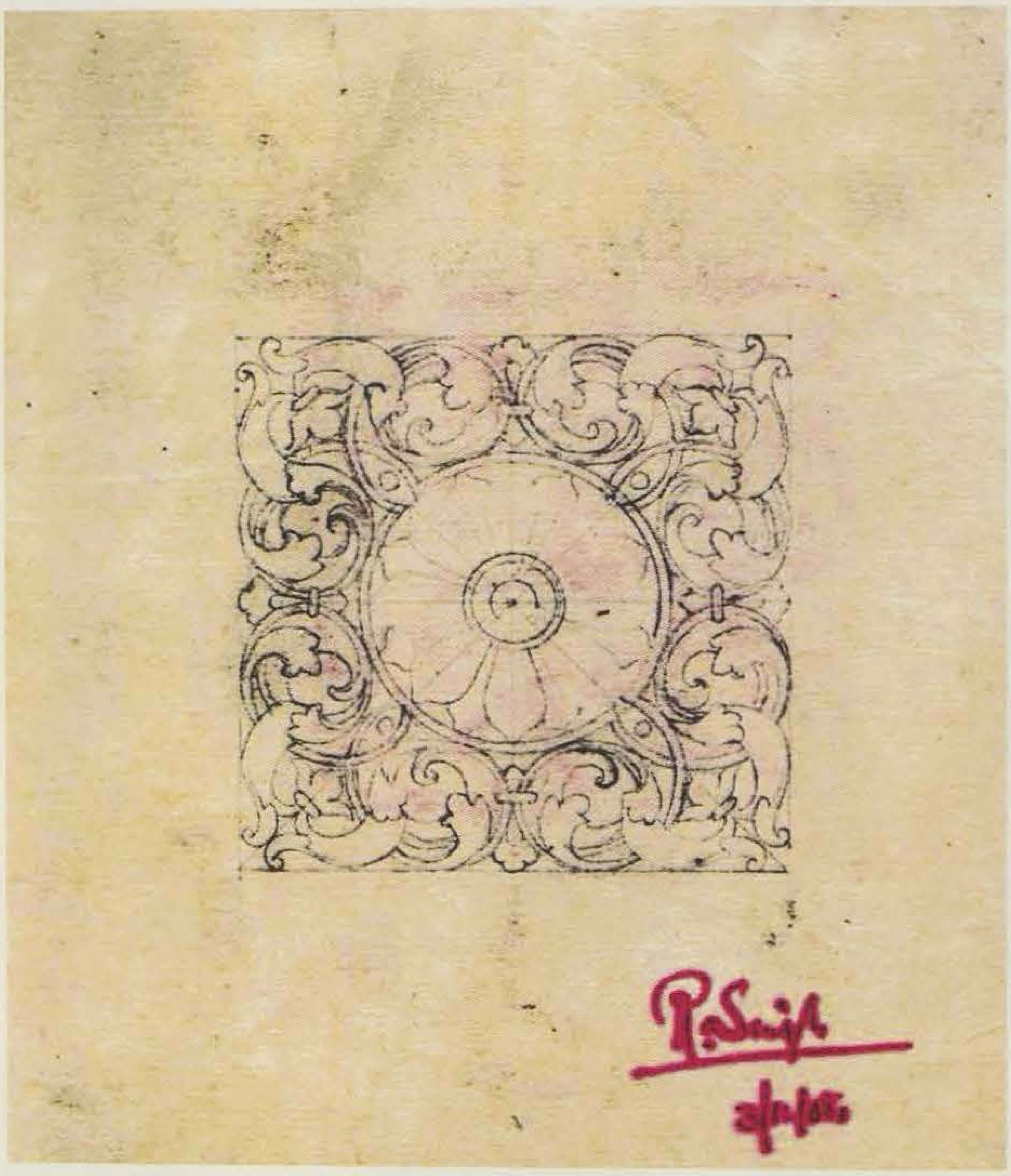
Detail of floor pattern dated 17 July 1903. Could have been for one of the projects Bhai Ram Singh was working on during this period (Khalsa College; Interiors of Drawing Room Barnes Court, Snowdone)

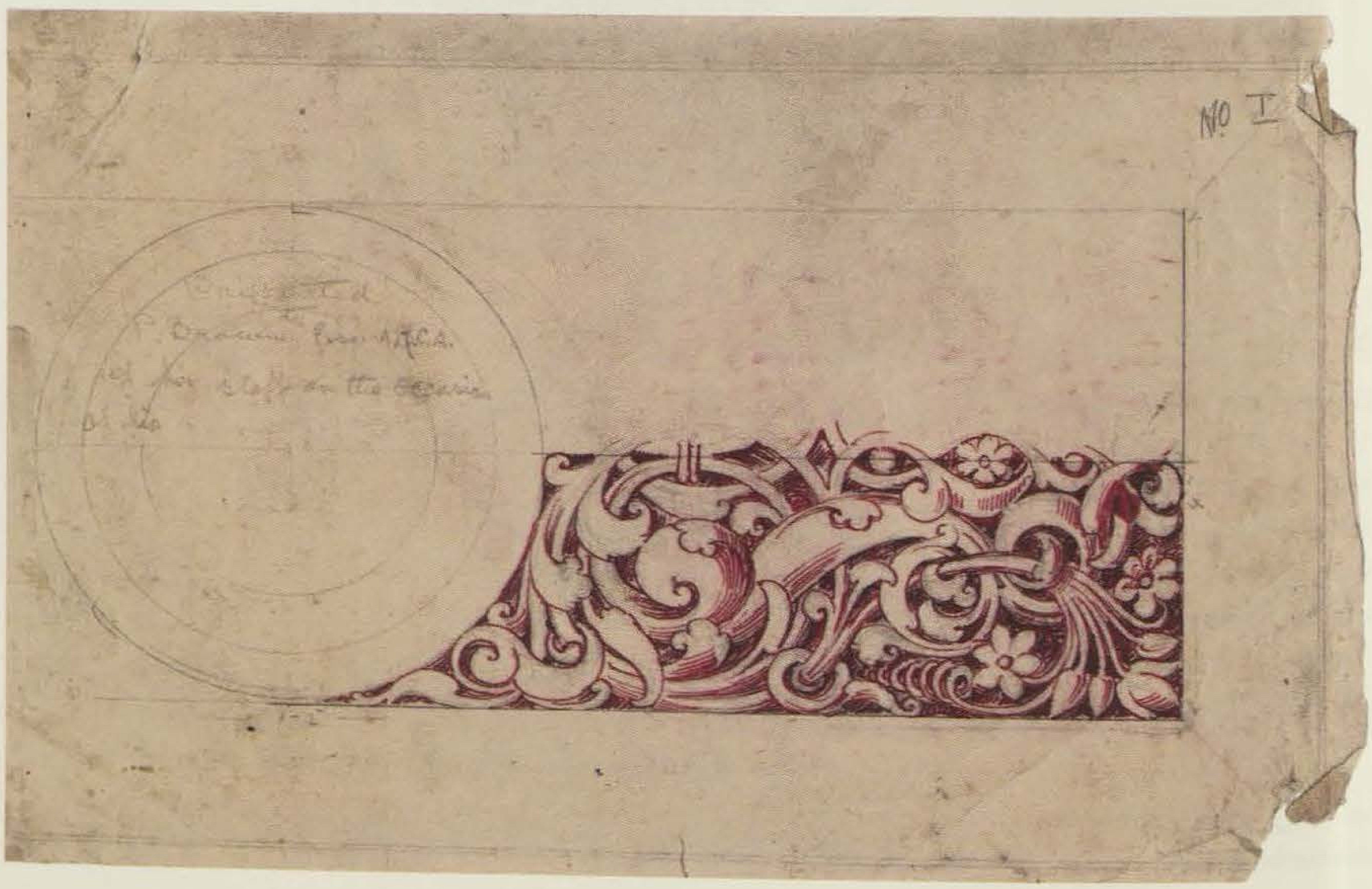
Ram Singh's family Amritsar; also numbers 40, 41

40

Drawing for what appears to be a Table top.

Dated: 3-11-1908





41

Drawing for a memento, written in pencil: "Presented to Percy Brown Esq. A.R.C.A. of (by) his staff on the occasion of his…" probably retirement.

and the development of current designs based on that study, constitute the twin sources of the esthetics elaborated by Bhai Ram Singh in his work. He consistently pursued this integration of two streams, using the tradition-based motifs and details for ornamentation and embellishment of objects, be it a piece of furniture, a building or a border on a certificate, finding expression in his later work as an architect and master craftsman.

Architectural Works as a Student

Ram Singh, by 1881, had been under Kipling's tutelage for 6 years, when an opportunity arose for him to work on an important architectural project, the buildings for the Mayo School of Arts in Lahore. Kipling in his proposal to the Secretary to the Government of the Punjab, for the organization of the Mayo School of Arts, dated 27 May 1875, a month after taking charge as Principal, wrote at length on the need for suitable accommodation for the School. He surveyed the range of proposals then being considered, from hiring of suitable houses (which he did not quite favor) to the Post Office buildings being given to the School (which he found suitable and thought that a proposal to the effect had been made by Colonel Young) to the possibility of new construction. His foremost thought was that the school should be located close to the Museum, and if possible a new building for the Museum be constructed through a Government grant at the same time. As founding Principal he had grandiose plans for the new school, 'It is not probable that we should at once surpass the beautiful work on Wazir Khan's Mosque, but we could certainly produce something of a distinctive and artistic character, which might result eventually in the resuscitation of a dying craft.'[64] He proposed that the services of Casper Purdon Clarke or of Major Mant, who was, at that time, on special duty to the Government of India should be secured to furnish the 'general design and the details of the construction, while the working out

64. Note dated 27 May 1875 from J. L. Kipling, Principal, Lahore School of Art, to the Secretary to the Government, Punjab

of the ornamental and subsidiary details would provide most instructive occupation for young draughtsmen, mistris, carpenters, &c.', concluding '…I would respectfully urge that it is of considerable importance that a building … should be conceived and designed in an Oriental spirit'.[65]

The Officiating Secretary of the Public Works Department submitted Kipling's proposals to the Government in June 1875, suggesting that the Post Office be removed to a location near the Railway Station and the buildings be given to the school.[66] In reply, the PWD Secretary was informed that the Lieutenant Governor thought that the idea was 'quite out of the question, and cannot be considered'.[67] Kipling's idea of the Museum to be constructed simultaneously was also put aside in that 'The Lieutenant-Governor regrets that he is quite unable to hold out any hopes of an early grant of Government money towards the construction of a new museum, so that the design of the School of Art must be treated independently and with reference to the requirements of the school alone.'[68]

The Lt. Governor also did not share Kipling's enthusiasm for the hiring of a renowned architect for the building and directed the Secretary Punjab Public Works Department to proceed with the design of the school, expecting that the Secretary would 'best know whom to entrust with the preparation of the plan of the building'.[69] Kipling lowered his sights and in his report for 1876-77 wrote that the funds for the building will not 'allow of any lavish expenditure in decoration nor indeed is it desirable. But the preparation of the design in conjunction with the Executive Engineer will give us work for which we are trying to prepare ourselves by the study of good

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65. ibid
66. Letter No. 266 C dated 28 June 1875, from the Officiating Secretary Government of the Punjab, Public Works Department. Quoted in Home Department Proceedings October 1875 P 749
67. Letter No. 3533 dated 27 October 1876 from Officiating Secretary, Government of the Punjab to Officiating Secretary PWD, Home Department; Proceedings October 1876 P 749. (The Post Office under reference was the old post office located at the end of the Mall which is now Office of the Post Master General, and not the present General Post Office which was constructed later in c1900.
68. ibid
69. Letter from the Secretary to the Government, Punjab, to the Secretary to the Government, Punjab, Public Works Department, dated 27 October 1876.

examples. It is proposed that the building shall be of plastered brick and Saracenic in style.[70] By 1876, the site for the School, eventually selected, was a prominent location near the Station Library[71] on the Mall, the main road of Colonial Lahore. This site, of about 15 kanals, was carved out of the gardens of Wazir Khan[72] with the north edge on the Mall and in close proximity to the Exhibition Building (present Tollinton Market), which housed the Museum. Kipling took the design of the school buildings in hand and promptly inducted his star pupil in the process. An amount of Rs 37,232 (half the assets of the Mayo Memorial Fund) was placed at the disposal of the PWD for the buildings. It was, however, not till 1882 that the buildings were constructed and started functioning at their present location.

The Public Works Department in Colonial India worked as a construction management agency with an attached design office. The design office prepared the construction drawings, usually based

42

Mayo School of Arts Lahore-*Educational Buildings in India,* 1911

Designed in 1882-83 under supervision of the Principal, the Mayo School building was the first major architectural work by Ram Singh.



MAYO SCHOOL OF ARTS, LAHORE

70. Report on Public Education, Report on the Mayo School of Industrial Arts for 1876-77

71. Report on Public Education, 1876-77. The Station Library later became the Punjab Public Library.

72. The present day secretariat and other government offices, such as the Museum, PWD Secretariat etc in the locality are located on the site of gardens of Anarkali and Wazir Khan south of the city.



43

Courtyard fountain Mayo School of Arts.

Photograph National College of Arts Archives.

on standard designs, and the Executive Engineer tendered the work, selected the contractor, supervised the work at site and paid the contractor after verification of his bills. The design office was staffed with engineers and draftsmen trained at Roorkee, who brought their European-biased training to the design of buildings. Architects were commissioned only for special buildings and then the Department implemented their designs, with little role for the architects. The Executive Engineer, the officer responsible for the tendering and supervision of construction, was thus the visible and key person on site, and in common parlance, therefore, buildings were said to be designed and constructed by the Executive Engineer. Latif writing in 1892 credits the design of the Mayo School of Arts building to the then Executive Engineer, Kanhiya Lal[73] at one place in his book and Kipling in another,[74] while Bhai Ram Singh is mentioned as the assistant.

A report on educational buildings compiled by the Education Department[75] in 1911, lists the Mayo School as 'designed by Rai Bahadur Ram Singh under the supervision of Mr. J. Lockwood Kipling, C.I.E., then principal of the school.' In the introduction to the report Mr J Begg,[76] the Consulting Architect to the Government of India, makes a passing nod, 'We find however, the handiwork of other than engineers as well, as when, the master [Ram Singh] of

73. Kanhia Lal, born c1830, graduated from Roorkee and joined government service in 1850.

74. Sayed Muhammad Latif, *Lahore: Its History, Architectural Remains and Antiquities…*, New Imperial Press, Lahore, 1892 p 305,

75. *Educational Buildings in India*, Occasional Reports No 6, Government of India, Department of Education, Calcutta 1911

76. Begg, J. Introduction to *Educational Buildings in India*, Occasional Reports No 6, Government of India, Department of Education, Calcutta 1911.

44

A brickwork feature of the Mayo School of Arts, Workshop Block.



one of the schools of art appears in the character of designer in certain instances, while in others it is apparent that the native " draftsman" has supplied such architectural knowledge as was considered requisite'.[77] Howsoever, by 1911, the Memorandum for the Victorian Order had already been published crediting this work to Ram Singh, while a student at the Mayo School, under instruction of the Principal.

The School of Arts (presently the National College of Arts) building is a brick-faced, imposing structure, fronting and set back from the Mall, opposite the Punjab University and next to the Museum. The famous Zamzama gun, immortalized by Kipling's son Rudyard, today, stands on a traffic island of the Mall opposite the building. A driveway leads through, what was a garden, to the portico at the eastern end. At the time of construction, the building comprised three wings wrapped around an open courtyard with the partially double-storied north wing facing the Mall. The offices of the Principal, the Vice-Principal, clerical staff along with a show room in which the works prepared by the students and the teachers could be displayed, were located on the ground floor of the north wing. At its western end was the drafting studio. Above the Principal's and Vice Principal's offices in the north wing was a large hall 63 feet by 24 feet. The west wing

77. ibid



45

Fresco upper room, north wing, Mayo School of Arts. J.L. Kipling engaged students to embellish the building.

had three large studios for elementary tuition, geometrical and model drawing and for carpentry. The south wing had the room for modeling and plasterwork, and a room for painting. The rooms were of generous proportions and lofty, ranging from 18 feet in height in the north wing, to 30 feet in the west and south wings and of dimensions ranging from 39 feet by 31 feet (west wing) to 46 feet by 28 feet in the south wing. Light for an art school is of special significance, thus, northern light was brought in, as far as possible, through the use of large windows, and for the west wing, skylights were used. For the south wing, a corridor was placed on its northern side separating it from the western wing, and light was brought in through large windows. Designed for the extreme heat of the Punjab plains, the verandas on the western and southern sides of the wings protected the rooms from the direct summer sun. Ram Singh used his skills and knowledge of details of brickwork to humanize the scale of the exposed brick surfaces with molded ornamental bricks and terracotta *jalliwork* (fenestration) judiciously used in the arched veranda openings. The building facades were subdivided into panels, and the plinth, cornice, lintel and sill levels, were accentuated through intricate brick detailing using varying-sized and ornamental bricks. The corners of the north wing, the main façade of the School, facing the Mall, were emphasized with turrets and *chatris*, while ornamental embellishments such as the stucco work under the eaves, lent the

building grace and texture. A marble drinking fountain was specially designed for the center of the courtyard.

Kipling, who proposed to engage the students in the embellishment of the new building had Pinto, the School modeler, prepare students in practicing modeling for architectural works. A series of panels of sculptures 'in high relief of animals, heads, foliage &c., intended for the panels in the brick façade of the School of Art, where they will serve to show the capabilities of the material at present scarcely used in the Punjab'[78] were prepared but were eventually not incorporated in the brick façade. However, the friezes made for the interior of the rooms of the west and south wings were made by Pinto's students and are still there. Likewise, only one panel of wall painting made by the students is in the upper room of the north wing, although Kipling had the designs prepared and had planned so that each student would render a panel 'in which his name would be inscribed'.[79]

It was not till the Museum and its attached Victoria Technical Institute was built about 10 years later (1892-3) along the eastern side, that the courtyard was finally enclosed. It seems that shortage of space to accommodate the School's activities was a problem even in the early days and the repousse and blacksmith classes had to be held in two rooms of the Museum at the back of their lecture hall.[80] Eventually an area of about one acre was acquired at the back of the School for workshops and till these were built in 1912-1913, the space was used as a playground. The extension to the south wing, designed in 1888-89, was probably also constructed at the same time. All these buildings were designed by Ram Singh and thus the vocabulary and integrity of the earlier design was maintained very well.

Rai Bahadur Kanhiya Lal, Executive Engineer, Lahore, was

78. Report on Public Instruction in the Punjab and its Dependencies Appendix F, 1884-85

79. Report on Popular Education. 1883-84 Appendix F,

80. *Educational Buildings in India,* 1911, op cit

responsible for the construction management[81] of the buildings of the School of Art and during the years that it took for these to be completed in 1882, Ram Singh had several opportunities to interact with the engineer. This may well have been the beginning of the close liaison that the Mayo School and Ram Singh developed with the Punjab Executive Engineers who later provided them with several opportunities to collaborate on various projects. By the time later additions were made to Mayo School of Arts Buildings, in 1889-90, Rai Bahadur Ganga Ram was the Executive Engineer and the MVO Memorandum mentions several works carried out for him by Ram Singh.

Ram Singh had this unique opportunity to learn through theory and practice as a student, and as he carried out more comissions, he acquired greater maturity of design and application of refined details. His training thus combined the then contemporary theory, along with a practice-oriented study of existing native architecture, integrating a modern outlook with a deep mastery of tradition. He never sought to abandon his traditions nor did he turn away from contemporary thoughts on architectural practice. He did not pursue one or the other and instead integrated the two in a creative and magnificent manner.

Mayo School of Industrial Arts, Assistant Teacher, (1883-1894)

Ram Singh joined the service of the School on 1st April 1883 as non-gazetted staff, in the capacity of Assistant Drawing and Carpentry Master and remained in this position for more than eleven years, till his promotion to a gazetted appointment on 5th October, 1894 as Drawing and Carpentry Master. These were busy years for Bhai Ram Singh, for in addition to his

81. During the colonial period the PWD draftsmen, under the supervision of the Executive Engineer, prepared the design for the vast majority of construction. For some special buildings it obtained the design from some architect (in this case Ram Singh) and implemented it through departmental procedures. In common parlance the credit for design etc was given to the Executive Engineer.

teaching duties at the Mayo School, he carried out several architectural works and prepared material for the various exhibitions held during this decade.

During the year, 1883-84, the class entrusted to Ram Singh was involved in the preparation of a large model of the under-construction Chief Court buildings in Lahore, now the High Court, designed by Mr. Brassington of Madras and supervised by J.E. Hilton, Executive Engineer at Lahore. While the model was intended to 'show the design as it works out in the solid, revealing faults of detail inevitable in most designs worked out on paper only, and offering an opportunity for revision'[82] the engineer did not feel that it would be of much use to the workmen. The priority of the engineers of the PWD was clearly not 'quality of design' but the routine implementation of a design as furnished by the design office. The High Court Building is a collage of various items such as Dutch Gables and truncated Qutub Minar as the body of the towers. Doors opening out from the towers onto the terrace, visible from the Mall, are an eyesore. Thus 'faults of detail' are still visible today in the front towers of the High Court building and it is the absence of such faults that take the designs of Bhai Ram Singh to extraordinary heights.

Despite his desire, Kipling, being heavily involved with preparations for the Calcutta International Exhibition (1883-84), had not been able to prepare the case for starting a class for 'purely architectural design and drawing' where 'a more systematic study of architecture and architectural drawing and modeling'[83] could be taught. The regular class for this purpose was finally set up in 1885-86, with Ram Singh teaching his carpentry students Architecture and Construction Design for part of the day, while the rest of the day was spent in instruction on woodwork. Senior students also attended the practical geometry course taught by Sher Muhammad, Assistant

82. Report on Public Instruction, 1884-85, Appendix F Report on the Mayo School of Arts, Lahore

83. ibid.

Teacher, using the South Kensington textbook, Burhcett's Practical Geometry, on the subject.[84] By 1887-88, Ram Singh's class was referred to as the 'Wood Carving, Architectural Drawing' class and had 40 students, 10 in the first class, that is, the advanced students, and 30 in the second class, a substantial number for the times. Thus, gradually, some courses in architecture were introduced, making a departure from the original aims of the School.

The Mayo School also, consciously attempted to develop textbooks in the vernacular, for use in the Punjab. The instructions in the geometry course were given in the vernacular language, which provided an opportunity for the Principal and the Assistant Teachers to work out how the English terms could be rendered in the vernacular and help in the preparation of a course book to be used both at the Mayo School as well as at other schools and by artisans. By 1886, an elementary free-hand drawing book with '16 examples of conventional Indian flower forms in outline'[85] and other designs were under preparation, while the course books of instruction in elementary geometry, free-hand drawing and carpentry for the use of ordinary and industrial schools, kept the Principal and his two Assistant Teachers, Ram Singh and Sher Muhammad, fully occupied through the years 1887-88.[86]

The intensive training prepared the senior students to assist Ram Singh in the execution of the plentiful commission-work received from different sources, and preparation of material for the exhibitions in which the school was asked to participate[87] during this decade of 1883-1894. The nature and scale of the work also changed, reflecting the greater maturity of Ram Singh's skills, as clients entrusted the School with works of architecture in addition to carpentry. One such project commissioned in the earlier years was the interior of the Billiard Room for the Duke of Connaught at Bagshot Park in Surrey, England. This assignment was given to

84. Report on Public Instruction, 1885-86
85. ibid
86. Report on Public Instruction, 1887-88. Report by J. L. Kipling, Principal.
87. ibid

the School following the visit of the Duke and Duchess there in the autumn of 1884, when it appears, the royal couple was greatly impressed with the wood carving at the School. Probably the work that so interested the visitors was that under preparation for the Indo-Colonial Exhibition, which was to be held at the Crystal Palace in London in 1886.

The exhibition intended to show the state of the art and industry of the province and Kipling had been given charge of the preparation for the Punjab Court. The schools of art were not presented as separate institutions; however some commissions were given to the Mayo School by Casper Purdon Clarke, which included 'the full-sized facsimile coloured drawings of the inlaid marble decoration of the Hammam at the Delhi Fort and of the fresco decorations of Wazir Khan's Mosque, Lahore'. Kipling entrusted the most important work to Bhai Ram Singh, which was, 'screen work in carved wood that served as a facade to the Punjab Court.'[88] This entailed 250 feet of elaborately carved wood work and since this had to be executed in a very short time, the design was prepared in such a way that it could be given to outside workmen at Lahore, Amritsar and Udoki. Most of the design work was done by Ram Singh, assisted by young carpenter draughtsmen. Kipling proudly wrote in his annual report for 1885-86 that 'The published criticism on the completed work in the Times, Graphic and other journals has been always eulogistic.'[89] This screen cost Rs 3928. The six staff members involved in the exhibition, all received medals and diplomas, three of the students were also given medals; thus, the school bagged nine medals in all.[90] Another work of this period of 1884-85 was the design for a carved screen, which was presented by the Punjab Government to the Indian Institute at Oxford. The design for this was prepared at the direction of Mr. Basil Champneys, the Architect of the Institute, and executed once again at Amritsar.[91]

88. Report on Public Instruction, 1885-86
89. ibid
90. Report on Public Instruction, 1886-87.
91. Report on Public Instruction 1884-85.

For the Billiard Room commission, Kipling asked Ram Singh to collaborate with him and in the summer vacations of 1885, both were busy with developing the design for the billiard-room. The project was conceived as 'an elaborate arrangement of carved wood in the style of the last century of Punjab wood decoration'[92] lining the walls of the newly completed Billiard Room. The walls and ceilings were to be lined with intricately carved wooden panels, while furniture was also to be designed at the School in keeping with the "Indian" theme. Eventually the adjoining corridor and the smoking room were also included. The Duke took a great interest in the commission, discussing the minute details of the work through letters exchanged during the years 1884-88, and he stopped by at the School in September 1884, on his way from the Hills to Meerut, to discuss the design. On approval of the design, the students made full-sized experimental drawings and models. For the walls of the Billiard room alone, there were two hundred and forty-one wooden panels, each profusely carved and of a different design. The wooden ceiling panels in a geometric design, carved wooden brackets and cornices, panels for the doors, the jambs, the carved skirting, the window moldings, the *bukarchas*, the fireplace, and then, for the adjoining corridor, ten *Cheene dans* in the *Pinjra* work style of the Punjab, were designed and made. The work was too large to be taken up entirely at the School, thus, the 'choicer panels' were 'reserved for the practice of the wood-carving class in the school',[93] and the rest of the work had to be contracted out to carpenters in Amritsar who worked under the direction of Bhai Ram Singh.

The two hundred and forty-one carved deodar wood wall panels of the Billiard Room were each of a different design with a variety of plants, trees and animals. Flowers included roses, daffodils, tulips, carnations, and irises, while the trees included the chenar, palm, willow and mango tree. The profusion of animals included

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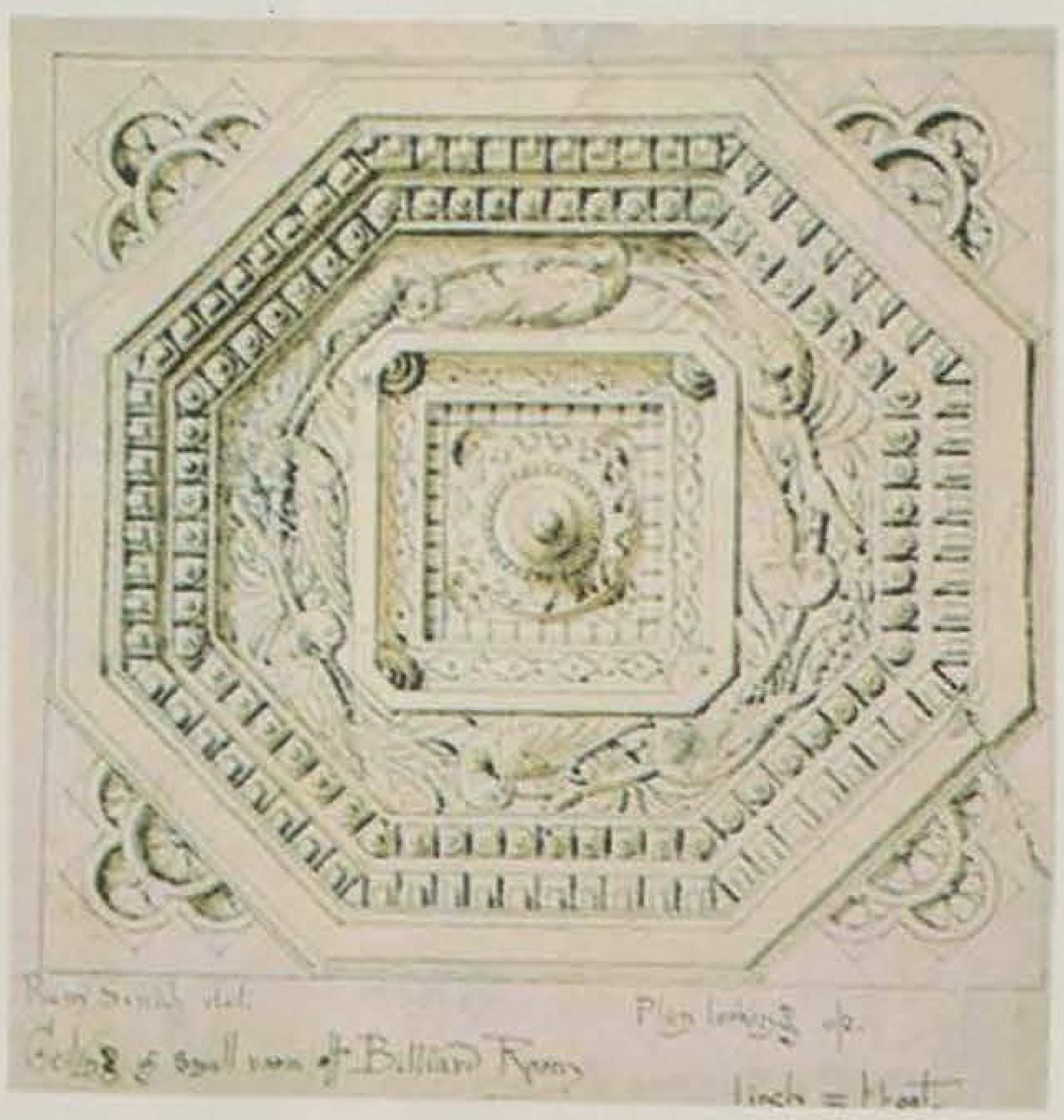
92. ibid
93. ibid

46, 47, 48, 49, 50.

Selected panels, Billiard Room, Bagshot Park. The Interior of the Billiard Room at Bagshot Park, was a commission of the Duke of Connaught. J. L. Kipling and Bhai Ram Singh collaborated and worked on this during the years 1884 onwards. The panels were installed in the room in 1888.



woodpeckers, peacocks, fantail pigeons (*Lakha*), *mainas*, hoopoes, paddy birds, kingfishers, parrots, fishes, cobras, elephants, chameleons, rabbits, turtles, and a hedgehog. The hybrid imagery had a plethora of motifs and forms, such as a composition of the crescent and stars in two of the panels, two elephants standing under a mango tree, birds entwined in trees with chameleons, fishes and other animals also making an appearance, and for good measure, *Ganesh*, the elephant god of good fortune. The imagery used in this hybrid design was in keeping with the desire of the Duke and Duchess, who discussed in detail each aspect of the design, and gave suggestions on what motifs they would like, and the general effect as well. In one instance the Duchess wanted the ceiling of the smoking room attached to the Billiard room, to be carved like the 'Mount Abu temple' and the Duke wanted 'a grotto like effect.'[94] Two carved panels were designed for the Duke and Duchess with their emblems, and placed on each side of the scoreboard; the designers were immortalized, with two panels on each side of the fireplace, to mark their contribution; one for Kipling and the other for Bhai Ram Singh, inscribed 'Lahore. J.L Kipling, Principal Mayo School of Art 1885-1887' and 'Ram Singh, Master Mayo School of Art 1885-1887'.



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Gilding of Small Room off Billiard Room : Plan looking up

In 1888, the panels and other carved parts, as well as the decorative metal fittings, like the cast brass door handles, with the exquisite motif of a bird, and the furniture were transported to England where they were installed with the help of Mohammad Buksh and Juma, two Punjabi carpenters who had stayed on in England after the Colonial and Indian Exhibition

94. Letter from Duke of Connaught to J L Kipling, dated 4 June 1889.

of 1886. The Billiard room interior and the furniture was paid for by the native rulers who had been persuaded, in the colonial tradition, to give it as a belated wedding gift to the royal couple.

The work of the Billiard Room led to another royal commission, this time from Queen Victoria herself. Records show that the Queen visited her son at Bagshot Park and saw the interior of the Billiard Room and was greatly impressed with the design. The Queen's summer retreat, Osborne House on the Isle of Wight, had recently been expanded with a large room added in 1890-1891 for holding receptions. Kipling, on vacation in England was contacted, who in turn suggested that Bhai Ram Singh should be given this assignment. Bhai Ram Singh started working on the new assignment and by November 1890, the interior scheme of the new room had been submitted to the Queen. Detailed observations of Princess Louise, the youngest daughter of Queen Victoria and an accomplished sculptress in her own right, were conveyed back through letters written by Sir Henry Ponsonby, the Queen's private secretary, to Kipling, who in turn conveyed these to Ram Singh in Lahore, in order for him to make the modifications. Comments pertained to the proportions, design, motifs, and the lack of the 'oriental tone'.[95] However, what eventually emerged was another hybrid design to suit the image of what was perceived to be Indian in Victorian England. In the circumstances it became essential that Ram Singh should see the room and be in England to attend to this assignment. Ponsonby wanted him to arrive in England by January 1891. Kipling made the arrangements and settled the terms on behalf of Ram Singh. Ponsonby suggested £100 to cover his passage to England and back and £5 a week to fund himself while in England, as well as a room near Osborne, paid for by the royal household, but he wanted the cooking to remain Ram Singh's responsibility fearing that 'the feeding of Mahammadan is always troublesome'.[96] Kipling agreed to the suitability of the terms and reassured Ponsonby that Ram Singh was a Sikh, and that 'he would rather die than touch

95. Letter from Ponsonby, Sir Henry to JL Kipling, Balmoral, dated 3 November 1890

96. ibid



52

Interior View of Indian Room-Osborne House. Later called the Durbar Room, this was a commission given by Queen Victoria for the public room added to the summer residence of the Queen, on the Isle of Wight. Bhai Ram Singh was on leave from MSA from 1st January 1891 to 31st March 1893 working on this assignment.

Permission of English Heritage Photo Library

beef and tobacco'!

Bhai Ram Singh was initially given leave for one month for January 1891, and left for England on the liner, P&O Hall, from Bombay on January 10, 1891. Arriving in London by train from Paris he was met by Kipling, who was still in England on leave. Ram Singh first stayed for a few days with Kipling, but had to leave for Osborne where the Queen was in residence, and later made his own arrangements, taking a room in East Cowes on the Isle of Wight paid for by the royal household. Thomas Cubitt was the architect of the additions to Osborne House and the London firm of G. Jackson & Sons had been engaged as contractors for the "Indian room" later named the Durbar Room. During the discussions held between all those involved, it seemed advisable that Bhai Ram



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Ram Singh at Work in the Indian Room. Bhai Ram Singh was given a studio on site by the Contractors Geo Jacksons & Sons.

Permission of English Heritage Photo Library

Singh stay on till completion of the project and he was given further leave of six months. When his period of leave expired, he was given further leave of absence, this time without pay, for a period of one year and nine months from 1st July 1891 to 31st March 1893 to complete the task. Starting with a month's leave his stay in England extended to more than two years.

The Durbar Room, at the eastern end of the residence, was a space 60' x 30' and 20' high which had to be done in a manner that would satisfy the Queen's view of "oriental" or "Indian". The



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Ram Singh was much acclaimed by the British Press. This photograph of Bhai Ram Singh accompanied an article on the Durbar Hall, Osborne House.

Illustrated London News, August 1891.

room had bay windows on the eastern side and a ministerial gallery on the shorter northern end, while the other two sides had rooms leading from the adjacent ante-spaces. Ram Singh and Kipling set themselves to the task and suggested that the room should be lined in carved wooden panels. However, this time the money had to come from the Queen's own resources and it was decided that a less expensive way be found. Plaster was a good alternative, and the ceiling was designed to be deeply coffered plaster panels set in a checkerboard divided with heavy ornamental ribs. Each panel was embellished with a central floral motif of intricate design, while the central panel had four birds in a circular pattern. Bhai Ram Singh had to prepare wooden panels from which molds could be cast. The walls were enriched with plaster and carton pierre (a type of *paper-mache* common in the late nineteeth century) in a hexagonal arabesque filled with floral motifs in low relief. A mahogany dado was planned with rectangular and square plasterwork tiles in three different designs extending around the entire room; for this three different patterns had to be developed and carved wooden panels prepared so that casts could be made. For the rectangular panel the motif of a vase with flowers was designed, while the two square panels, one with a floral motif and the other with two birds, had to be carved. Then the panels for the doors had to be made again in cast-plaster with carved wooden dividers. The Ministerial gallery at one end with *jhorakas* (balconies), and carved brackets, the smattering of *buckharchas*, the chimneypiece, all required intensive work. Geo Jackson & Sons, the contractors for the project, placed one of their studios on site at the disposal of Ram Singh so that he could superintend the project and provide all the models to the contractors. They also agreed to provide him with all the material that he may need, as well as templates and framework for molding.[97] Once the design

97. Estimates from Geo Jackson & Sons, 49 Rathbone Place, London West, dated 9 April 1891

had been finalized, the contractors estimated the cost to be £2250, without the chimneypiece, the design for which had yet to be finalized.

While still in Lahore, Ram Singh had proposed an arch above the fireplace, but Princess Louise had disagreed with the proportions and felt that the shape had not been 'well conceived' and that 'the gallery on top of the fireplace is clumsy and too heavy' and inquired whether an 'Indian flower, a peacock or something of that sort be suitable'[98] Eventually, a peacock in pride was approved, which now forms the centerpiece of the entire ensemble. The peacock is delineated in high relief and took Bhai Ram Singh's team more than 500 hours to complete.

After Ram Singh arrived in England, discussions regarding the design were personally taken up by Princess Louise, and thus every motif used was approved, and in consonance with the Princess's view of the 'oriental tone'.[99] The Durbar Room eventually became an 'Indian room' imprisoned within a Victorian building, representing the British view of India, with a hybrid mix of motifs and elements. Thus, *Ganesh* with a litany of lesser Indian gods makes an appearance over the door, while stylized elephant trunk - shaped brackets, invoking *Ganesh*, are placed under the cornice and for good measure *Wala Ghalib Illal Lah* is gilded on the lower wall beneath the gallery, while at the upper level sunflowers are painted. *Buckharchas* on either side of the fireplace, and on the façade of the ministerial balcony, along with the *pinjra* work railing in the arched openings replicate the Punjab woodwork. A plethora of animals like pheasants, birds, peacocks, lion heads, deer, fish, intertwined with flowers, were all harnessed to satisfy the royal princess and the Queen. The color of the room was decided by the Princess to be white and gold, because she felt that any other color would be 'common', although Ram Singh had suggested light blue and gold.[100] The ornamentation

98. Letter from Henry Ponsonby to J.L. Kipling, Balmoral, dated 3 November 1890.

99. Letter from Bhai Ram Singh to J.L. Kipling, 49 Rathbone Place, dated 25 February, 1892

100. Letter from Henry Ponsonby to J.L. Kipling, Osborne, dated 6 January, 1892.

and embellishment kept increasing, with the contractors complaining that this was exceeding the original budget. It appears that the Contractors and Ram Singh fell out by the end, but the work was completed to the entire satisfaction of the Queen. Ram Singh was also asked to do the furniture for the room. He ended up by designing a number of furniture pieces, including thirty-six carved dining chairs with a pheasant motif on the back rest, two of which he made himself; there were sideboards, and four matching side tables, stands for the electric lamps, a hanging lamp for the bay window, a grate for the chimney and firedog, and the brass door-handles for which the same bird motif was used as in the Billiard Room. Several of these furniture pieces are no longer in the room and are being re-collected from the various places that they seem to have been sent.

These two royal commissions, the Billiard Room for the Duke of Connaught and the Durbar Room for Queen Victoria, show the superb mastery of the designer and the excellent workmanship, but it borders on the incongruent – that the plain British exterior of the building conceals the opulent "Indian interior". The Durbar Room epitomizes the eclectic and hybrid architecture of the late nineteenth century, while demonstrating the superb craftsmanship and design of Bhai Ram Singh. Through the years 1892 and 1893, the press reported on the happenings at Osborne in terms like, 'The room is Orientalised to the height of the most cultivated Indian Rajah's imagination; and with such surroundings, when the Queen dresses in Indian costume and enters her Imperial Room at Osborne, Her Majesty will look a real Indian Empress'.[101] 'The balcony, chimney piece and bay…in ancient Hindu and Sikh pattern'[102] and 'the Hindoo Sikh scheme of decoration has been carried out with singular beauty and

101. *Forget-Me-Not*; 31 December 1892

102. *The Graphic*, 29 October, 1892

effect'.[103] The Daily Telegraph wrote on the dinner given by Victoria in honor of her cousin, the German Emperor, the Kaiser on 1st August, 1892, 'Over the principal doors are *buksharchas* of pagoda fashion, while the *pinjara* balcony is in thorough harmony with the quaint carvings of Janish and the God monkeys, and of the light and beautiful Galub Kari Alcove and the giant peacock over the mantelpiece. Bombay vases of light blue ware figured in indigo tints, Indian carpets threaded with those marvelleously intricate patterns which the Hindoos have borrowed from the Persians, were shown in friendly rivalry with silver Eastern vases ...'[104] The St. John's Wood, Kilburn and Hampstead Advertiser 25th August 1892, commenting on the peacock wrote, 'The work is suggestive of Eastern sovereignty, the peacock being a regal bird in the pleasances of the Maharajahs. "By the peacock" was at one time a sacred oath, the fabled incorruptibility of the peacock's flesh causing the bird to be adopted as an emblem of immortality.'[105]

Ram Singh's stay in England was extended beyond what was originally planned. By September 1891 Ponsonby hoped that the work would be nearly completed by the time the Queen visited Osborne in December, and conveyed the Queen's command that, 'Ram Singh's work should be finished by December and after the first, no further pay will be issued to him'.[106] Ram Singh himself was anxious to get back. His son had died and he needed to attend to his family affairs. Kipling had returned to Lahore by 9th September 1891, but he kept close contact through letters with Ram Singh and Henry Ponsonby, the Queen's Secretary, and was elated with the fact that the Queen was so satisfied with the work that Ram Singh was executing at Osborne House. The work was finally completed in 1893.

The work at Osborne House earned laurels for Ram Singh and the press reported him in glowing terms in newspapers of the time,

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103. *The Daily Telegraph*, 2 August 1892

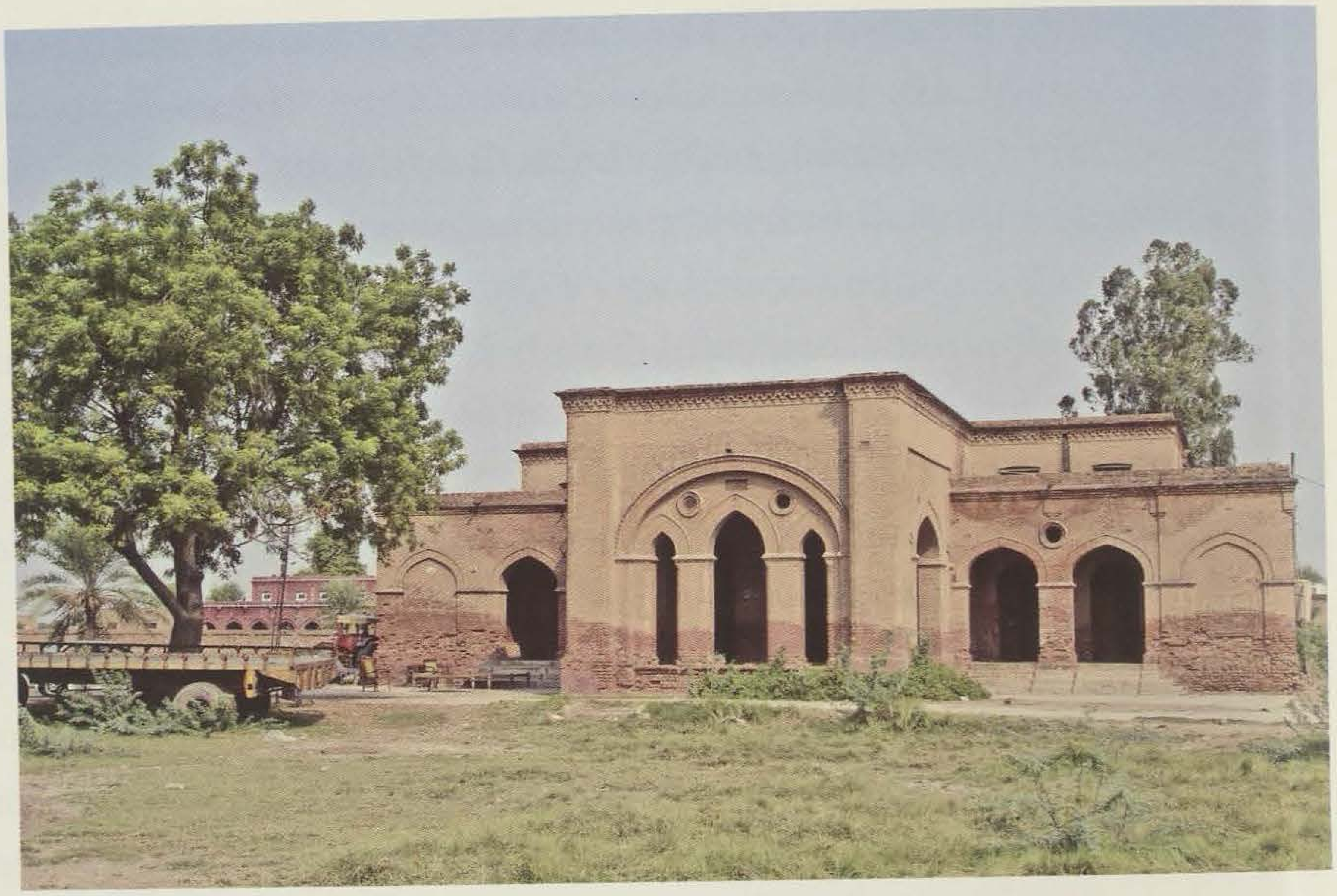
104. ibid

105. *The St. John's Wood, Kilburn and Hampstead Advertiser*, 25 August 1892

106. Letter from Henry Ponsonby to J.L. Kipling, Balmoral Castle, dated September 11, 1891

55

Kalra Estate
The Bunglow situated in the front part of the Estate, appears to be the public part of the complex. It has a large drawing room with ornate decorations and mirrors.





56

Kalra Estate
Behind the Bunglow are what appear to be the family quarters of the Estate.

variously referring to him as 'Professor of Art'[107] and 'a formidable rival'[108] for English artists. The leading newspapers of the time such as the *Illustrated London News*, *The Graphic*, *The Star*, *The*

107. *The Daily Telegraph* "London Day by Day" 31 December 1891; *The Star* " Cassell's Saturday Journal" 24 February 1892

108. *Modern Society* 5 March 1892.

Evening News, all carried articles and pictures of Ram Singh and his work at Osborne House and Bagshot Park. The Royal family was equally appreciative and sent him gifts, a silver mounted blotting book from the Duchess of Connaught, portraits of the royal couple, while the Queen gave him her signed portrait and a gold pencil case for Christmas 1891. The Queen commissioned her court artist, the Austrian, Rudolph Swoboda to paint his portrait which now hangs at the entrance to the Durbar Room at Osborne House. Ram Singh also received invitations as a special guest and speaker from Associations such as the National Indian Association in London,[109] while he was 'admitted to private theatrical performances, in which several members of the Royal family took part, as well as to other court functions which are generally regarded as of a very exclusive order'.[110] The Society for the Encouragement and Preservation of Indian Art gave him a certificate for "good work of all kinds".[111] Ram Singh had earlier designed a certificate for the Society, which was highly approved by Sir George Birdwood and others for which he had received a prize of two books from the Society. The Society's certificate was important enough to be mentioned in the MVO Memorandum.

Meantime in Lahore, Kipling seized every opportunity to proudly introduce Ram Singh to the local gentry, referring to him as 'our most accomplished architect'.[112] One such occasion was when James Wilson, the Assistant Commissioner, Shahpur, and the Administrator of the Kalra Estate, wrote to Kipling[113] for a design for a house for Malik Umar Hayat Khan on the estate. Kipling suggested that the commission should be given to Bhai Ram Singh, who was, at the time, expected back from England in two months after completing the Durbar Room for the Queen at Osborne. Kipling took upon himself to settle appropriate terms for his protégé, suggesting a fee of three percent. He argued that a three percent

109. *The Star*, 24 February 1892.

110. *The Evening Standard* 17 January 1893

111. Letter from Society for the Encouragement & Preservation of Indian Art to Bhai Ram Singh dated 28 October 1892

112. Letter from J L Kipling, Principal Mayo School of Art, Lahore to J. Wilson, Deputy Commissioner Shahpur, dated 25th March 1892

113. Letter No. 262 dated 22nd March 1892 James Wilson, Deputy Commissioner Shahpur to J.L. Kipling, Principal Mayo School of Art.

fee was a moderate architect's fee in England and now that Ram Singh was aware of the terms on which architects worked in England, he would naturally expect the same. Kipling berated the practice prevalent in India at the time, to 'give a lumpsum for a design (without the working drawings, details and supervision that make a building alive) and to hand the work to local Mistrees who cannot do it justice'.[114] He impressed that, 'A large number of working drawings and models and frequent inspection of the work while in progress would be necessary to make a really tasteful and suitable building'.[115]

On his return to the School on 1st April 1893, Ram Singh rejoined as Assistant Drawing Master, still as a non-gazetted official, however, this decade of service as Assistant Drawing Master was a particularly busy period for Ram Singh,[116] with a number of projects assigned to him by the School. This was also the period when he came into contact with Rai Bahadur Ganga Ram, the Executive Engineer, Lahore, meeting him frequently over projects where he was the architect and the construction was carried out under supervision of the Public Works Department. They must have struck a good professional relationship because Ganga Ram, throughout his tenure, associated him in several designs of buildings that the PWD implemented. The works that he carried out with Rai Bahadur Ganga Ram were later mentioned in the MVO Memorandum under, 'the works carried out for the Executive Engineer'. The major works listed were the superstructure of the Punjab Chief's College (later Aitchison College) at Lahore (1886); the Municipal Hall and offices at Ferozepur (1886); Lady Aitchison Hospital, Lahore (1887); New Museum and Technical Institute, Lahore (1889-90); the Khalsa College, Amritsar (1892). Additions were also made to the Mayo School of Art campus in Lahore in 1888 and 1890. In addition to the works for Ganga Ram mentioned in the MVO Memorandum, the other works of the period listed were

114. ibid

115. ibid

116. Ganga Ram (1851-1927), trained at Rookeree, was made officiating Executive Engineer Lahore in 1899 and prematurely retired from the position in 1903. Joined Patalia Durbar as Superintending Engineer 1903-1911; received MVO in 1911 Durbar, Knighted 1922

the Lady Lyall Home, Lahore; (1890) Albert Victor Hospital, Lahore (1890); Government College Hostel, Lahore (1891), the Munsiff's Court, Amritsar, and a memorial at Peshawar.

Bhai Ram Singh's involvement, in 1886, with the project of the Punjab Chiefs' College, later the Aitchison College, was the result of an India-wide competition announced in the leading newspapers of the time, for the design of the main building of the College. The genesis of the College lay in the British experience of transforming the leading rulers and particularly their children into loyal subjects, rather than disaffected opponents, through an education that extolled the British as rulers. It was conceived as a residential school on the lines of the public schools in Britain, and in keeping with the two successful schools already established in India, the Rajkumar College in Kathiawar (1870) and the Mayo College at Ajmer (1875). Considering the importance of this venture, the then Lieutenant Governor, Sir Charles Aitchison (1882-1888) himself became the patron and appointed a galaxy of ruling Chiefs of the Punjab as Visitors. Thus, the Maharaja of Jummoo & Kashmir, the Maharaja of Patiala, the Nawabs of Bahawalpur and Maler Kotla and the Rajas of the States of Jind, Nabha, Kupurthala, Nahan, Faridkot and Chamba all found themselves involved with the school, contributing financially to the enterprise,[117] with the Provincial Government contributing an equal share. By January 1886 a sum of Rs 240,000 had been collected, half of which had been contributed by the Government. Frequent meetings were held, chaired by the Lt. Governor himself, while a Committee of Management,[118] with the Commissioner Lahore as the President, was set up for day-to-day affairs; another Committee, this time headed by the Civil Surgeon Lahore,[119] was entrusted with the task of selecting a suitable site for the College.

117. Ex-officio members were the Senior Judge of the Chief Court, the General Officer Commanding the Lahore Division, the first Financial Commissioner.

118. Other members were Nawab Abdul Majid Khan (Lahore); Sardar Ajit Singh, (Amritsar); Sardar Bikrama Singh, (Jullundur); Sardar Jiwan Singh, (Umballa); Sardar Bhagwan Singh of Sohana; and Nawab Nawazish Ali Khan of Lahore. The ex-officio members being the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner of Lahore; Director of Public Instruction; and other Government functionaries of Lahore such as the Civil Surgeon, the District Judge, Inspector of Schools.

119. Other members included Dr. Dickson, Supt. Central Jail Lahore ; Executive Engineer Lahore and Nawab Abdul Majid Khan. Home Department Proceedings, General, No.3 Page 8, January 1886

The site selection Committee began to function by January 1886 and examined various options. Initially a site at Shahdara was considered, but soon abandoned for it was felt that 'a suitable one can be found on one side or the other of the Meean Meer Road between Government House and the Canal'.[120] The north side[121] was found more suitable, with 'no indication of recent occupation or graveyards',[122] fertile soil 'to obtain proper tree-shade and ornamental grounds'[123] and good quality drinking water. A site of 86 acres, 2 roods, 23 poles, falling within the Mauzas of Mozang and Meean Meer,[124] was carved out of this land and acquired for the College; later it was increased to about 130 kanals. Municipal water was made available by laying a main from Charing Cross, a distance of 7000 feet at an 'approximate cost of Rs 6000.'[125]

Robert Booth[126] had prepared the design of the Rajkumar College at Kathiawar, and after much ado, Major Mant was finally commissioned to prepare the design of the Mayo College at Ajmer. The Punjab project falling in the same genre, required a carefully considered design in consonance with the educational standards and political objectives of the Raj. The Punjab Public Works Department presented a sketch design prepared by a Capt. Abbot and the rough estimates by the Chief Engineer, in the meeting of the Visitors and Committee of Management on 2nd January 1886.[127] Not being quite satisfied, the meeting decided to organize a competition among architects for the design through a public announcement in the press. It was also decided that the College should be planned in a way 'which will admit of gradual enlargement

120. Letter No. 2834, from R.G. Thomson, Offg. Junior Secretary to Government Punjab to the Sanitary Commissioner, Punjab dated Lahore 27th November 1885, Home Proceedings 1886, Page general-4
121. Report of the Committee on the proposed site of the Punjab Chiefs' College, Home Department Proceedings, January 1886 annex; letter from Rai Kanhiya Lal, the late Executive Engineer Lahore to the Civil Surgeon Lahore offering his land on the right side of the road for this purpose at a cost of Rs2000.
122. Ibid. Page General-5
123. ibid
124. Gazette Notification No. 249 dated 1 February 1886. Home Department Proceedings May 1886, No. 84, page General - 166
125. ibid
126. Information given by Ms Ratanbai Framroz Cooper, Principal Emeritus, Rajkumar College. Robert Booth published a book *'Life and Work in India'*, 1912, which is not easily available.
127. Letter No. 3157 dated Lahore 26 December 1885 from Offg. Junior Secretary to Government Punjab to the Visitors, Home Department Proceedings January 1886 page General - 7

of the buildings.'[128] The buildings considered necessary were listed as the main building, student boarding houses, Principal's residence, servants and outhouses and the preparation of the grounds and the supply of water, while later a gymnasium and other buildings could be added. It was estimated that the initial works in the first phase would cost Rs 325000 while the eventual cost would be Rs 415000, including a sum of Rs 90,000 to 'complete the edifice in a worthy manner'[129] of which Rs 50,000 was earmarked for the Main Building.

An advertisement was placed in six newspapers, inviting designs for the Main College Building,[130] to be submitted to the Secretary of the Committee of Management not later than 20th April 1886, thus, giving competitors a time of about three months. The participants were required to submit a ground floor plan, an elevation, a section drawing showing general features of construction, a general description of the building with a detailed statement of the materials to be employed in construction, a certificate that the entire cost of construction throughout would not exceed Rs 160,000 approximately. The prize was fixed at Rs 2000 to be payable on receipt of full drawings, estimates and specifications. In the meantime the Public Works Department was asked to prepare the grounds and collect materials for construction.

The Mayo School of Arts decided to send an entry in response to the advertisement, despite the fact that the experience of the School, and Ram Singh, was limited to the design of its own buildings, which, because of the directions of the Lt Governor, were inexpensive, simple and practical, yet embellished by Ram Singh, with a scheme of decoration that gave it an excellent quality of design. The decision to pit this limited experience with the best architectural talent available in India showed courage and Kipling's

128. Prospectus of the Punjab Chiefs' College for the Education of the sons of Rulers, Chiefs and Gentlemen of Position in the Punjab and its adjoining Native States. Home Department proceedings, January 1886, page General,17-18 para 5

129. ibid

130. Home Department Proceedings for January 1886 and reference index No. 59, To Managers of certain newspapers forwarding insertions as an advertisement, a notice inviting designs for a College building for the sons of the Punjab Chiefs &c near Lahore.

confidence in the young, 28-year-old, Ram Singh. The Mayo School proposal reached the Committee by the appointed date of 20th April along with the submission of twenty-nine other entrants. When the Committee met on 1st May 1886,[131] under the Chairmanship of the Lieutenant Governor, twenty-four designs were rejected for various reasons as being unsuitable, and were returned to the authors.[132] The remaining five possessed 'much merit' and required detailed examination and comparison for which a sub-committee comprising the Raja of Faridkot, the Second Financial Commissioner, the Commissioner Lahore, Nawab Nawazish Ali Khan, the Motamids of Patiala State and Kapurthala State, was appointed. It was empowered to select the best of these, and if found fit for adoption, to award the sanctioned prize of Rs 2000. The Secretary was empowered to request the PWD to obtain the complete design and specifications from the author, and to arrange for the construction of the building 'either by contract or otherwise' under the supervision of the PWD officers, The Secretary also had authority to disburse the money as required for the construction of the building. The Sub-Committee narrowed down the selection to two proposals. They liked the layout plans submitted by Col. Samuel Swinton Jacobs,[133] Executive Engineer of Jeypore State, and the elevations, details, the picturesque grouping of domes, Moorish arches and decoration, conceived by Bhai Ram Singh. After much deliberation it was resolved that the Colonel should be asked to adapt his plans to accommodate the elevations and architectural features prepared by Bhai Ram Singh. This was indeed a singular achievement for Ram Singh, for Col. Jacobs was a highly regarded architect. Kipling, reporting on this in his annual report for 1885-1886, wrote that the Mayo School design had been 'adjudged to share the prize with a design by Colonel Jacob of

131. Home Department Proceedings January 1886 No. 78, Memorandum of business to be brought before the Committee of Management of the Punjab Chiefs' College on 1 May 1886. Page General 19-20

132. Home Department Proceedings May 1886, No. 91, Memorandum of the Proceedings of a meeting of the Visitors and Committee of management of the Punjab Chiefs' College, which assembled at the Lawrence Hall Lahore, under the Presidency of His Honor the Lt-Governor of the Punjab, at 7.30 on Saturday, 1st May 1886. Page General -169

133. Col Samuel Swinton Jacob was the Chief Engineer to Jeypore State from 1867-1911; architect of St. Stephens College, Delhi (1891), Bikaner Palace, Lallgarh, Bikaner (1902) Bikaner House, Bikaner (1893), Daly College, Indore(1912), Umed Bhawan Palace (1909), Victoria Memorial Hall, Peshawar.

57

Aitchison College-Main Building





58

Aitchison College-Main Building

Jeypore, a result which those who are acquainted with Colonel Jacob's work must regard as highly satisfactory for the School of Arts.'[134] The prize money of Rs 2000 was shared between Col.

134. Report on Public Instruction 1885-86; Appendix F Report on The Mayo School Of Arts, Lahore.

59

Aitchison College-Main Building





60

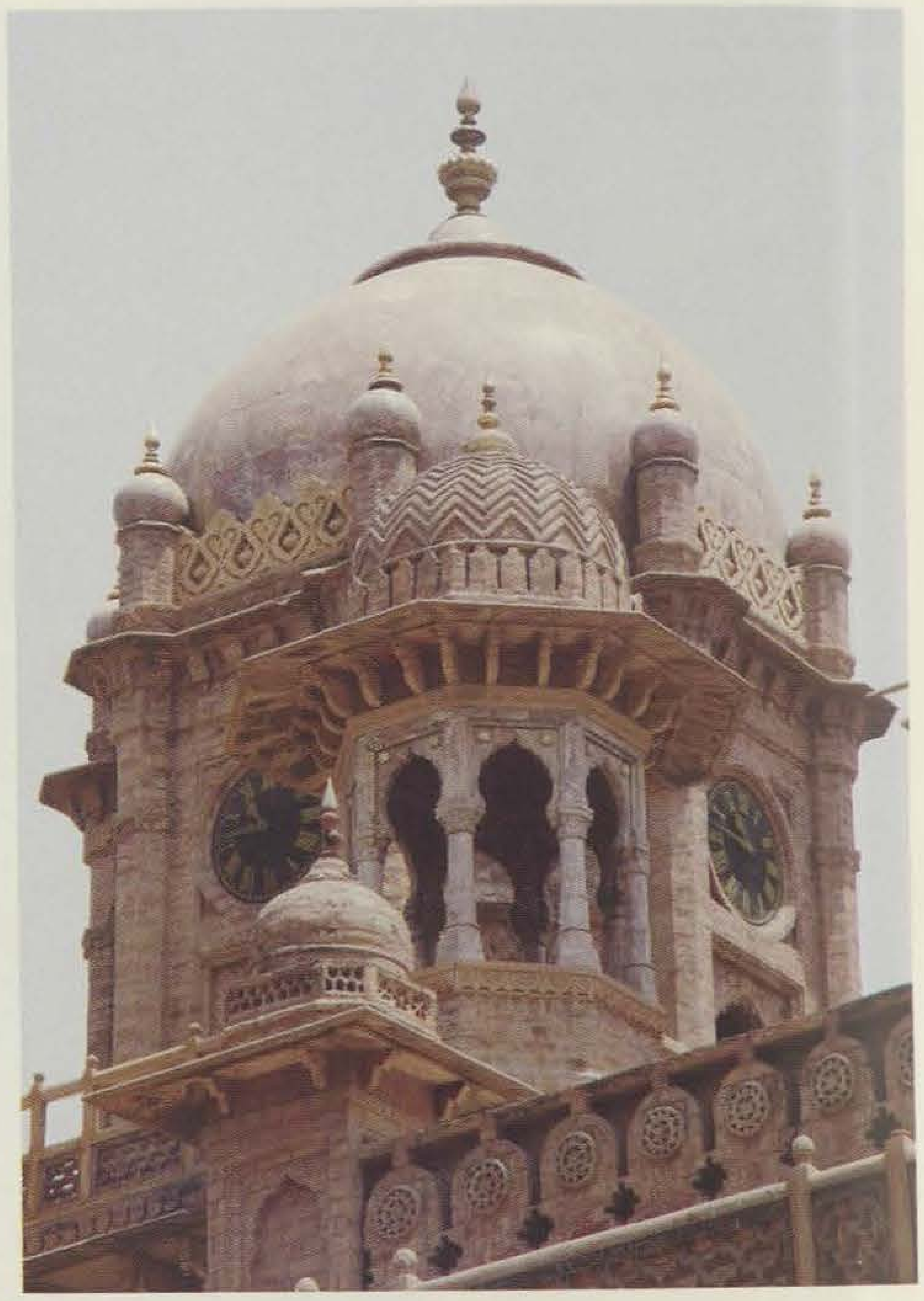
Aitchison College-Main Building



Jacobs and the Mayo School of Arts and in October 1886 an additional sum of Rs 2500 was paid to the collaborating architects; an honorarium of Rs 1500 to Colonel Jacob for his design and Rs 1000 to the Principal Mayo School of Arts.[135]

A grandiose foundation laying ceremony for the Main Building

135. Home Department Proceedings February 1891, No.10, Statement L, showing Miscellaneous Expenditure on Account of the Aitchison College Building Fund page General- 20



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Aitchison College-Main Building

was planned. The sketch submitted by Bhai Ram Singh was used on the reverse side of the invitation card. The Ruling Chiefs of the Punjab, the College Council and prominent officials all attended the ceremony on 3rd November 1886. The Viceroy, the Earl of Dufferin and Ava, laid the foundation stone and the Duke and Duchess of Connaught honored the occasion with their attendance. The Connaughts were already familiar with the work of Bhai Ram Singh and the Mayo School and their commission to the school of the interior of the Billiard Room at Bagshot Park was still under preparation. It must have given them some pleasure that Bhai Ram Singh and the School again received prominence through this prestigious work. There were other officials as well, attending this ceremony, who had already played a role in Bhai Ram Singh's life. There was the Secretary to the Punjab Government, William Mackworth Young, who knew Bhai Ram Singh from his Deputy Commissioner days at Amritsar, then there was Col Holroyd, the Director of Public Instruction, in whose veranda the School of Carpentry was held when Ram Singh enrolled in it as a young lad. Ram Singh was recognized as a rising star and each of the nine Punjab Chiefs attending the ceremony,[136] later commissioned Ram Singh for some work.

The Main College building comprised classrooms, a library and

136. Chiefs of Chamba, Faridkot, Nahan, Mandi, Kapurthala, Nabba, Jind, Bahawalpur, Jammoo & Kashmir.

reading room, science laboratory, play room, Hall and office rooms. The focus of the layout plan was the Hall, 70 feet by 30 feet running along the east - west axis. On the two longer sides, north and south, 3 classrooms 24 feet by 21 feet, were arranged, opening into the Hall with 12-foot wide verandas on the outer sides. On the west side, a double-storied porch, surmounted by a dome, was placed between the Hall and a deep covered terrace that had two additional classrooms at the north and south end. The east side was a double-story structure with two classrooms on the ground floor, two small staff rooms and a library above the classrooms, and two small rooms for a museum. The composition appeared as a three-tiered building with the centralized hall, like a church nave with high clearstory windows, being the tallest part, and the rows of classrooms forming the second tier, while the veranda completed the composition. Octagonal turrets surmounted by domes marked the corners of the central block which had the hall, while *chatris*, cupolas, domes and finials were used to accentuate the corners of the building, creating a highly articulated skyline. The porch dome had a composition of smaller domes around it to control the proportioning and visual effect of the composition. The construction was load-bearing brickwork and the façade had elaborate brick detailing at the cornice, plinth and parapet. The brickwork called for, and achieved, a high level of skill; the overall effect was one of a building strong in tradition yet fulfilling the then contemporary demands. The domes and *chatris* were also delineated in ornamental brickwork, reflective of the finesse of woodcarving, which was Ram Singh's forte. Eave brackets in red sandstone throughout the building, the use of red/pink marble cladding for the columns and the arches with the occasional use of elaborate *jhorakas* finished in white marble details and some intricately detailed entrances bespeak the mastery of details by the architect, and the intelligent use of colors to highlight features of the building. The verandas are screened with elaborate inter-lacing Moorish arches and red marble *jallis*. The interior of the Hall itself was embellished with stucco tracery details, frescoes

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Aitchison College, Lahore one of the three hostels built in 1888.





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Aitchison College, Lahore Bahawalpur House.

and an imposing balcony resting on sandstone brackets. Unafraid to learn from both the Indian tradition and the new European influence, Ram Singh created a unique composition and highly textured facades, which continue to be lively and charming.

The Main Building, started in 1886, took a long time to complete, as the money from donors was slow to come in, and was finally opened for use in April 1890,[137] although some work continued till the end of January 1891.[138] The College had to make a number of appeals to the Punjab Chiefs for help. The east end library wing had been deferred and it could only be completed when donations of Rs 25,000 and Rs 5,000 were received in January 1890 from the Maharaja of Kashmir and the Raja of Poonch respectively. The main building developed major cracks at the east end, which were wedged in 1896-97, but had to be repaired again the following year; this time tie rods were used; however, the earthquake of 1905 again damaged the east end of the main hall and the balcony which was considered too heavy was dismantled and replaced by a lighter structure in 1910.[139]

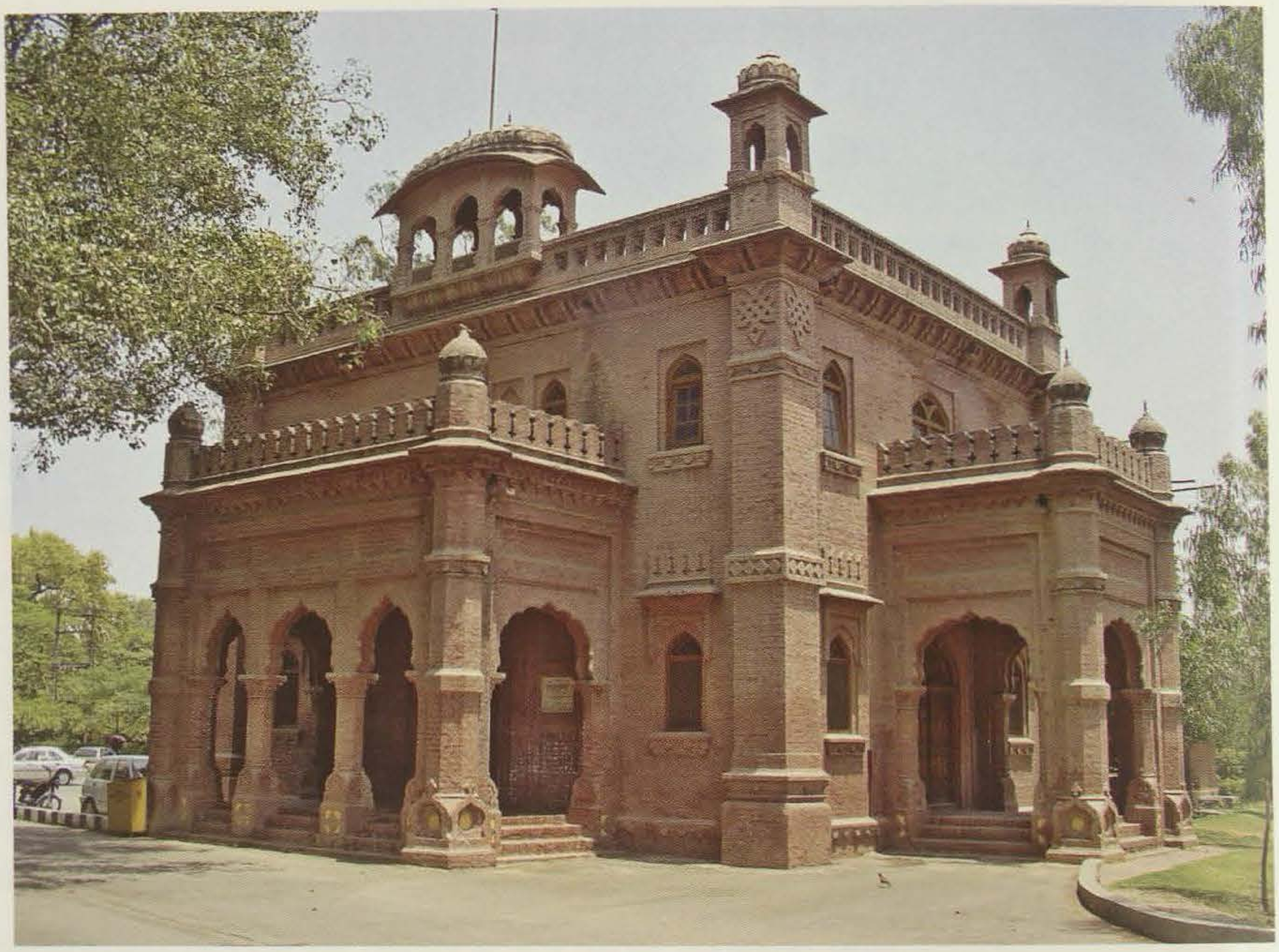
In addition to the Main Building, the first phase included three boarding houses for the students, the Governor and Principal's residences, as well as some other buildings. The boarding houses were completed by 1888, one was for Muslim students, the second for Hindu and Sikh students, while the third was for "scholars" i.e. for all religious groups. Two years later the residences of the Governor and of the Principal, staff quarters and some auxiliary buildings were completed. The overall cost of the first phase buildings, including the main building, was Rs 321574;[140] this did not include the buildings gifted to the College. The gifts were the hospital/dispensary, a gift of Sardar Balwant Singh of Berr, Ludhiana; a mosque, a gift of the Nawab of Bahawalpur, and the Gymnasium,

137. Annual Report of the Principal Aitchison College for 1889-90

138. Home Department Proceedings February 1891, Statement Y showing works at the Aitchison College 'which are in progress'. Page General-21

139. Annual Report of the Principal Aitchison College for 1909-1910

140. Home Department Proceedings February 1891, Statement X showing works at the Aitchison College which have been completed and for which Completion Reports have been submitted. Page General-21



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Aitchison College, Lahore Gurdawara.

a gift of Umar Hayat Tiwana. Following the completion of the Main Building, the first phase building activity was completed and the Principal reported that work had been done to the complete satisfaction of the College and praised Rai Bahadur Ganga Ram, the Executive Engineer and the PWD for the excellent work and for remaining within the budget. There was no mention made of the architects of the Main Building, Bhai Ram Singh or Col. Jacobs.

However, it appears that Bhai Ram Singh may have been involved in the design of the other buildings of the first phase as well; possibly in developing the plans, but most definitely in the detailing of the superstructure. All these buildings are stylistically and conceptually similar and have been delineated with the same details and indeed are a part of the same composition. Each of these buildings have rich detailing of brickwork, emphasized entrances using intricate *jalliwork* and brickwork, pronounced cornices, in some cases using sandstone brackets, parapets with patterns in

brickwork, while the massing of buildings have the tiered effect of the Main Hall. In the case of the three hostels of similar design, positioned at the rear of the Main Hall, and planned as a U-shaped building, the verandas running along the inner side have arched openings delineated in the same form as that used for the Main Hall, the only difference being that in this case the material used is brick and terracotta *jalli*, whereas the Main Hall had red marble cladding on the columns and red pierced marble *jalliwork*. The elements of design and their particular grouping establish that Ram Singh contributed to many more buildings in the Chief's College than was originally thought. Further to this is the known fact that Ram Singh's skills of design, proven in open competition, were now called upon by the PWD to provide details for the buildings being constructed by them. Thus it was only natural that Ram Singh was called upon to collaborate with Ganga Ram on several projects of the Aitchison College through the Public Works Department (PWD).

The later additions to the Aitchison College included the house for the young Nawab of Bahawalpur who was enrolled as a student at the College, built in 1899-1900, and the Dharamsala and the Temple designed in 1907-08[141] (completed 1912), and the house for the headmaster (1900-01),[142] and the Vice Principal (1901-02).[143] The drawings for the Dharamsala have been found among the papers of Bhai Ram Singh in the family collection, while the Nawab of Bahawalpur's house and the other structures are very much in the same style as the other buildings of the College. In fact the entire complex was so much in harmony that when a Cricket pavilion was added to commemorate the services of Major General S. Black, first Governor of the College in a different style, the Principal wrote in his annual report for 1903-04 that the pavilion was not in keeping with the rest of the buildings, and suggested that while keeping in mind the original purpose of the building, a more suitable building should be constructed. It was much later,

141. Annual Report Aitchison College 1907-1908
142. Annual Report Aitchison College 1900-1901
143. Annual Report Aitchison College 1901-1902

in 1915, that the Cricket pavilion was redone according to a design provided by W.G. Longdin, the Municipal Engineer Lahore,[144] and renamed the Bahawal-Black pavilion to commemorate the former Governor as well as the Nawab of Bahawalpur for his contribution of Rs 2000 for the building. The Principal, however, was not completely satisfied, and commented that, in design and appearance, the new pavilion looks like an ordinary cricket pavilion in England and was 'not therefore in keeping with the other buildings of the College'.[145] It was however there to stay.

In addition to the Aitchison College project, Bhai Ram Singh, assisted by several of the young students, prepared for another competition project in the years 1885-86,[146] this time for the Municipal Hall and Offices of the Lahore Municipality. A proposal was submitted which, although well received, did not win the prize, which went to Mr. Pogson, a Madras architect who was awarded the prize money of Rs 500. However, during the summer holidays of 1885-86, Ram Singh was assigned the design of the new Municipal Hall and Offices at Ferozepore,[147] which were built. This project received mention in the MVO Memorandum, along with another Municipal Hall, the District Board Hall in Allahabad, possibly also designed during the same period.

During the years of his non-gazetted appointment at the Mayo School, 1883 to 1894, Ram Singh carried out one or two major projects every year. In 1886-87, he designed the Lady Aitchison Hospital for Women, Lahore, built opposite the Mayo Hospital as a thirty-two bed maternity hospital. The foundation stone for the building was laid on 15th February 1887 and it was formally opened on 15th November 1888, by the Marchioness of Dufferin and Ava whose husband, the Viceroy, the Earl of Dufferin and Ava had earlier, in 1886, laid the foundation stone for the Aitchison College Main Hall. The Hospital was constructed under the supervision

144. Annual Report Aitchison College 1914 -1915
145. ibid
146. Report on Public Instruction, for the Year 1885-86, Appendix F Report by the Principal on The Mayo School of Industrial Arts, Lahore,
147. ibid

of the Executive Engineer, Rai Bahadur Ganga Ram, thus both these native luminaries had yet another occasion to work together. The hospital has since been demolished and replaced with an ugly structure.

In 1888-89 the design for the New Museum and Technical Institute Lahore, now the Lahore Museum, was entrusted to Bhai Ram Singh. While the design was approved during this period, the details and construction drawings continued to be prepared the following year.[148] Kipling was the curator of the Museum, and thus it was under his supervision that this work was undertaken, while Ganga Ram, as Executive Engineer, Lahore, was in charge of the construction. The foundation stone of the building was laid by Prince Albert Victor on 3rd February 1890, and the Museum was opened to the public in 1893, with the Lieutenant Governor, Sir Dennis Fitzpatrick performing the opening ceremony and inaugurating the exhibition held simultaneously to commemorate the event. At the opening ceremony both the Lt. Governor and the



CENTRAL MUSEUM, LAHORE

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Central Museum, Lahore designed in 1888-89 the museum was opened to the public in 1893.

Educational Buildings in India 1911.

148. Report on Public Instruction, Appendix J Report by the Principal on The Mayo School of Arts, 1888-89, Appendix L Report by the Principal on The Mayo School of Industrial Art, Lahore, for 1889-90

President of the Committee acknowledged the work of Bhai Ram Singh in glowing terms. The President remarked that 'the building in which the Exhibition is being held and which has been so ably constructed by Rai Bahadur Ganga Ram, Executive Engineer, was wholly designed in the School of Art and principally by Bhai Ram Singh under superintendence of Mr. Kipling'.[149] The Lt. Governor also mentioned the Osborne House project and his commission to Ram Singh of the drawing room of the Governor's House, Lahore.

The new Museum was an imposing building, located at a prime position on the Mall, abutting the Mayo School of Arts building, with a 70 - foot high dome and a 350 - foot frontage along the Mall. While the scale of the building itself was impressive, the design was such that critics of the time commenting on the building referred to it as 'an ornament to the city'.[150] Positioned on the east of the Mayo School, the Museum shared the carriage portico with the School, which was convenient, since Kipling was both the Principal of the School and the curator of the Museum. The building was set back from the Mall with a red sandstone drinking fountain placed in the center of a well-manicured lawn, which now abuts the edge of the Mall due to the widening of the road. The visitor's access was through a white marble entranceway leading to a veranda which had a deodar wooden ceiling, laid in a geometric pattern, and a marble floor. The choice of a white marble entrance set against the brick-faced building drew attention to the imposing building. There were cloakrooms placed on either side of the entrance veranda, and staircases leading to the upper levels and the roof. Beyond this, beneath the dome, was the lobby/vestibule, 20 feet by 20 feet and 70 feet high, with floral and geometric patterned 'paintings in oil' on the walls, wooden *pinjra* work railings at the upper levels and pendants in *munabbat kari* (stucco tracery) work. The Museum had three display areas, the entrance hall, 98 feet by 40 feet, for works

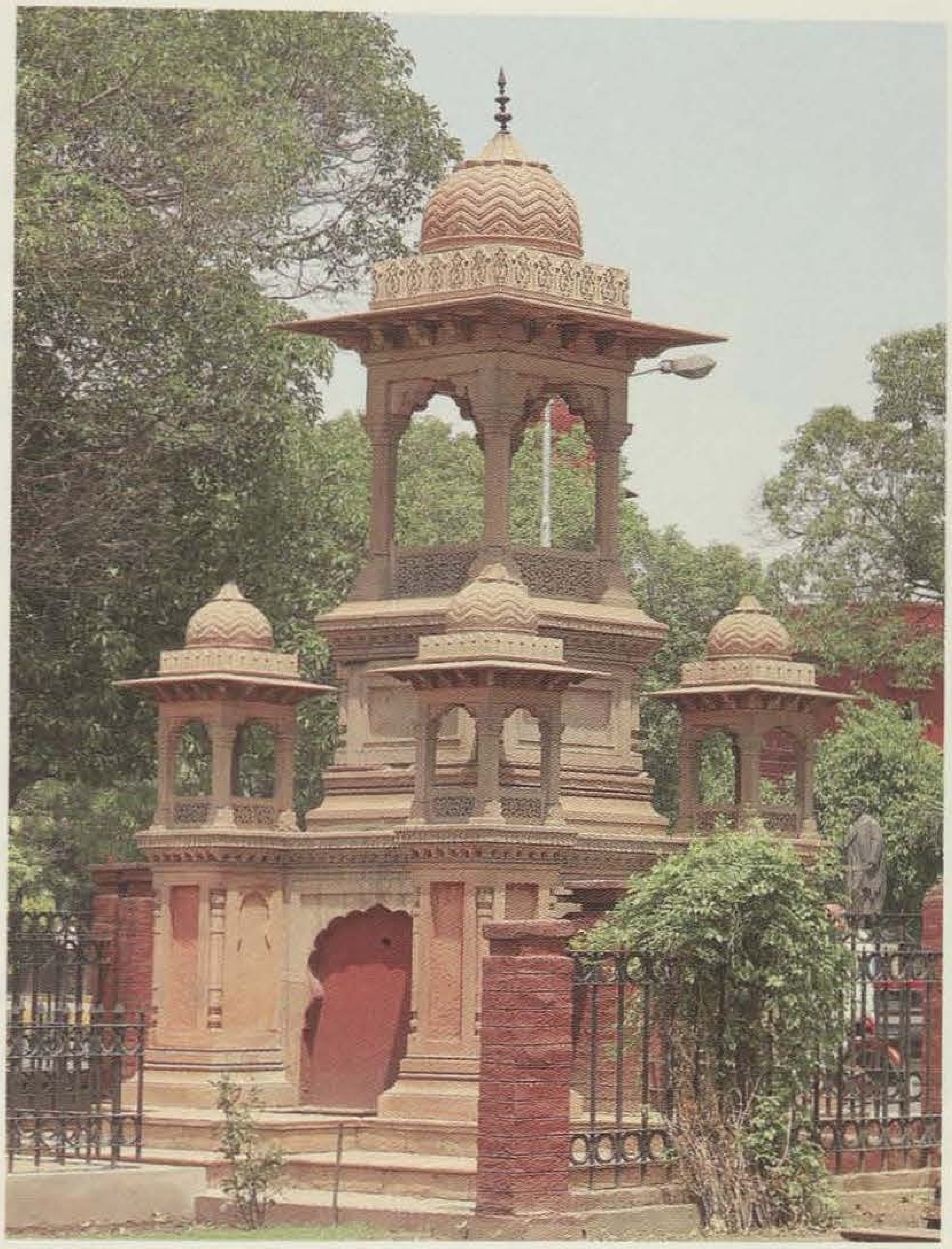
149. Extract of Speeches in the MVO Memorandum

150. Education Buildings in India, Occasional Reports No 6, Government of India, 1911

67

Lahore Museum-Drinking Fountain

Fountains, strategically placed formed a part of the architectural composition in several of Bhai Ram Singh's work. The Mayo School, the Museum, the Punjab University all had carefully designed fountains.



of fine arts, and adjoining it, on the east and west, two large rooms about 100 feet by 60 feet each, for the display of raw materials and art and manufactured goods. The sculpture gallery, 60 feet by 30 feet, was placed beyond the exhibition room on the east. A library and office was also provided at the eastern end. A lecture hall, with its own separate entrance was attached to the west. The lecture hall had a gallery which could be approached through a staircase in the entrance lobby. A room for storage of glass slides and 'preparation of gas for the working of the lantern'[151] was attached to the hall on the west. The saw-tooth roof



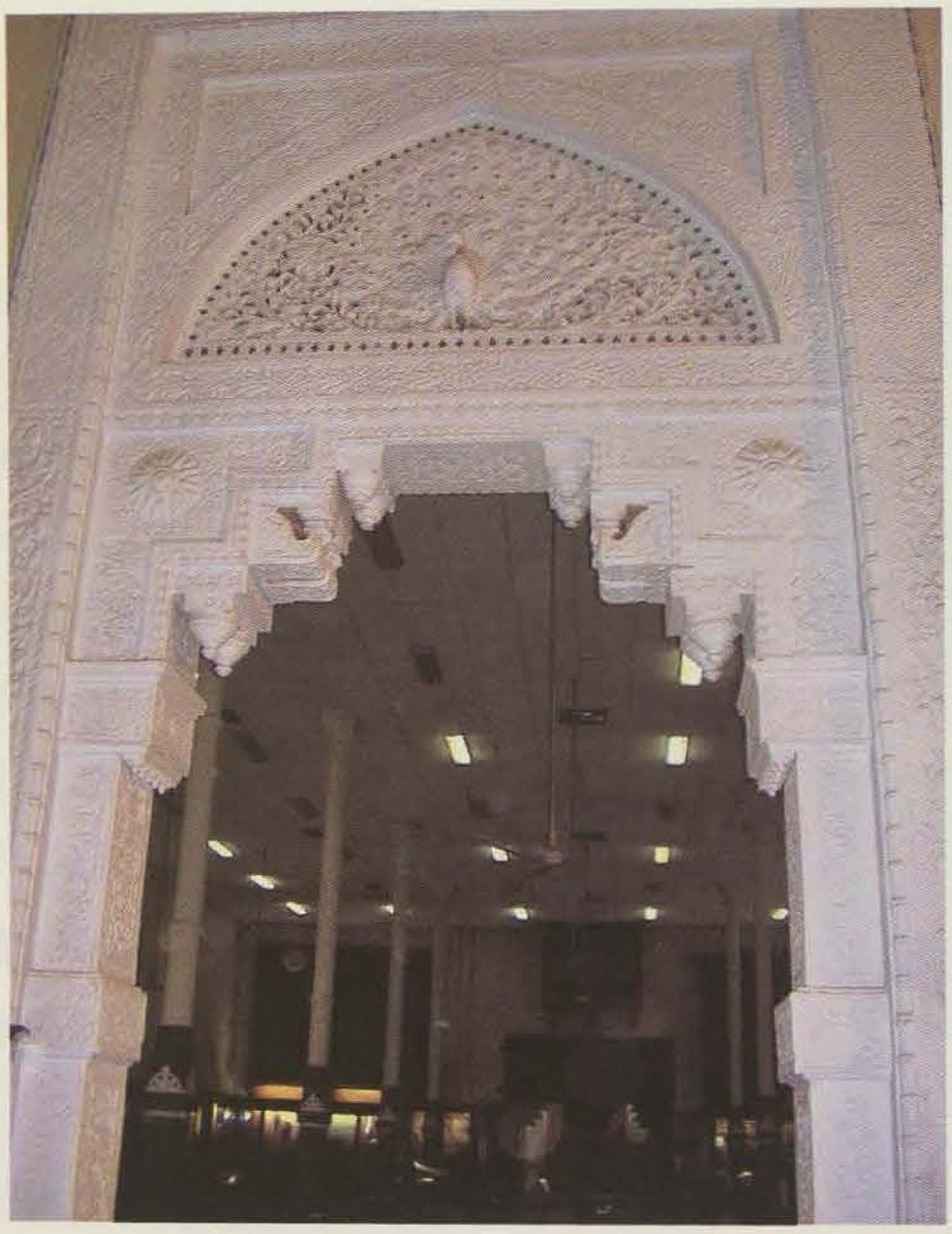
68

Lahore Museum-North View

151. ibid

69

Lahore Museum, entrance to the West Gallery–inner side. Peacock and details in stucco.



spanning the large exhibition halls was supported on cast iron columns and skylights were provided in the roof, in addition to the light from the nine windows in the north wall which had a sill of six feet, thus giving space for wall display.

The brick-faced building was rich in detail and highly-textured, with a composition of copulas surrounding the 70 - foot high dome; the ends of the building were accentuated through the use of *chatris* and cornices; the parapet, and window sill were highlighted through use of ornamental and molded bricks. The carefully worked-out



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Lahore Museum-Interior of entrance lobby looking up.

details of the exterior through use of ornamental and molded bricks echoed the detailing of carpentry. Inside, the rich building-craft tradition of Lahore was harnessed to accentuate features of the building such as the trabeated entrances to the two exhibition rooms, where *munabbat kari* work was used in floral and geometric patterns with a peacock in pride, taking center position above the entrance. There was no boundary wall between the Museum and the Mayo School in those days, thus the two appeared as one composition.

In the year 1889, Bhai Ram Singh designed the Lady Lyall Home and in 1890, the Albert Victor Wing of the Mayo Hospital. The Lady Lyall Home, located in close proximity to the Lady Aitchison Hospital for Women and the Mayo Hospital Lahore, was meant to be a boarding house for female students and 'calculated to remove the objections that are raised to women entering the medical profession'.[152] It had accommodation for 20 students with quarters for the Superintendent and servants. The Marchioness of Lansdowne laid the foundation stone on 25th November 1889, and the building was completed towards the end of 1890. It was constructed under the superintendence of Rai Bahadur Ganga Ram, the Executive Engineer, Lahore. In the usual Ram Singh style it exploited the potential of decorative brickwork at eaves, parapet and brackets. S.M. Latif writes, 'It has been laid out after an elegant design, is commodious and answers all sanitary requirements',[153] but Latif fails to acknowledge the architect Bhai Ram Singh. It was much later in 1911 that the MVO Memorandum lists this as one of the projects carried out by Ram Singh for Rai Bahadur Ganga Ram. The Lady Lyall Home has since been demolished and replaced with an ill-designed building.

The other project of 1890 was the Albert Victor Hospital, built as an addition to the main block of the Mayo Hospital, with Ganga

152. Latif, Syad Muhammad, Lahore: op cit, p 293 153. ibid p 294



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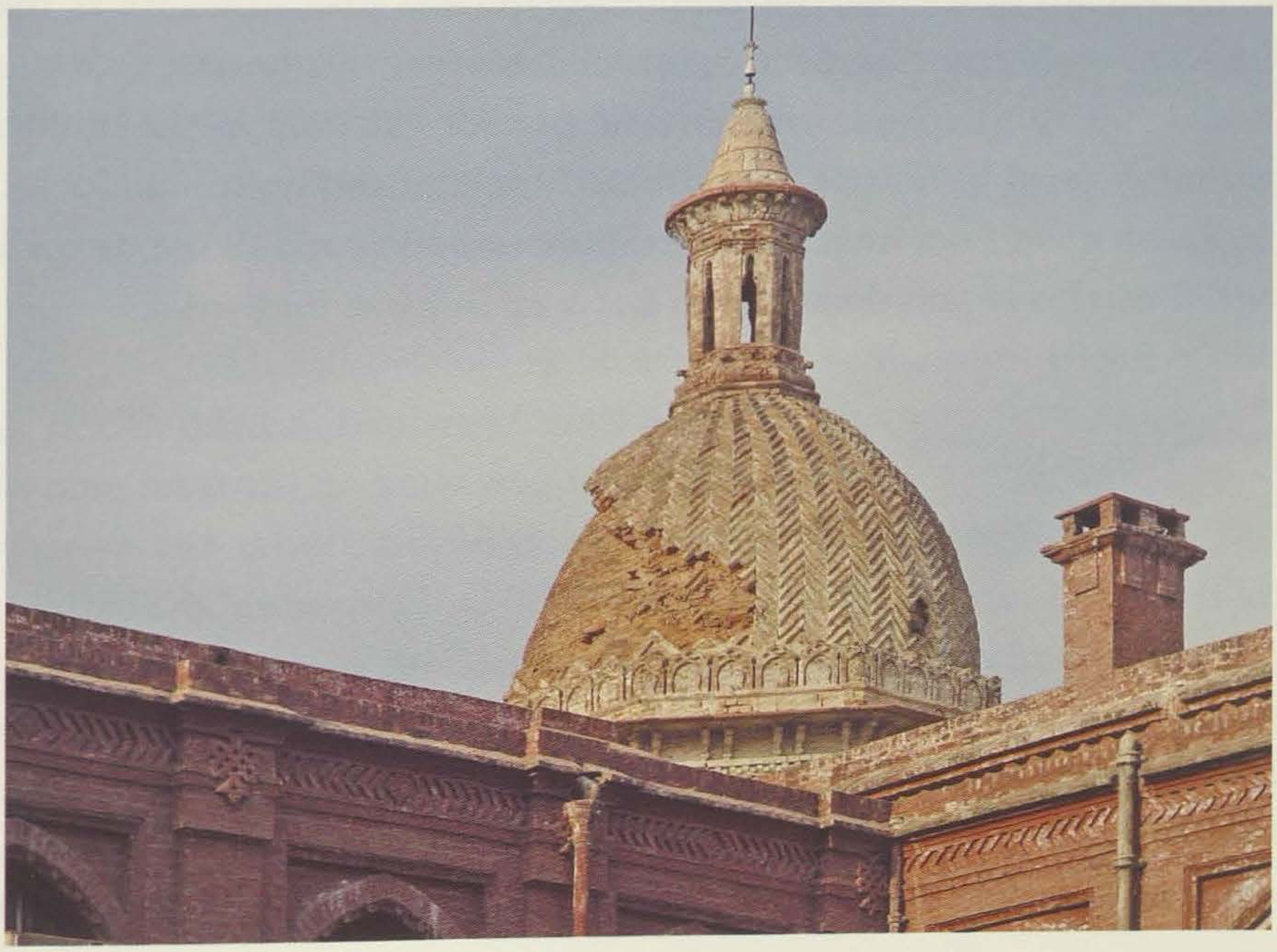
Albert Victor Hospital, Lahore.

The MVO Memorandum listed the buildings designed by Bhai Ram Singh for Rai Bahadur Ganga Ram, Executive Engineer, which included the Government College Boarding House, Lahore; the Albert Victor Wing Lahore; Lady Aitchison Hospital, Lahore; the Munsiff's Court, Amritsar; a memorial at Peshawar and Lady Lyall Home, Lahore.

Ram as the Executive Engineer. This addition to the Mayo Hospital was meant to increase the bed space for poorer classes of Europeans and Eurasians. Money was raised through public subscription on an appeal by the then Lt. Governor, Sir James Lyall, to commemorate the forthcoming visit of Prince Albert Victor to Lahore. The Lt. Governor laid the foundation stone for the Albert Victor Hospital on 14th May 1890. The new addition comprised three separate buildings on the west side of the Main Block of the Mayo Hospital. These included the inpatient double-storied block to accommodate 28 patients in three wards on the ground and upper floor along with private rooms; the infectious diseases ward, now used as the administration offices of the Mayo Hospital; while the third building was to accommodate the nursing staff, now used as the Nursing School. The buildings took two years to construct at a cost of Rs 1,08,580 and were formally opened by the Lt. Governor on 1st January 1892, at which time Bhai Ram Singh was in England working on the Osborne House project.

For the design of the Albert Victor Hospital, Ram Singh, in keeping with his style and philosophy, used the native architectural vocabulary, textured and decorative brickwork with sandstone brackets under eaves and window shades, which set it apart from the main building. The Mayo Hospital main building was designed by W. Purdon, Superintending Engineer, in 1871, borrowing elements of the European architecture and semicircular arches, labeled as "Italian"[154] by Muhammad Latif, implying that the vocabulary was neo - European with no native touch. Bhai Ram Singh's buildings, on the other hand, made elaborate use of ornamental and molded brick, shading devices and the vocabulary, style and details, which had become his signature.

The in-patient block, the main building of the Albert Victor Hospital, and its infectious diseases building are connected with a double-arched bridge connecting the upper floors and serving as entrance porches for both. It is a richly textured structure reflecting



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Albert Victor Hospital, Lahore. Dome from rear court.

154. ibid p 291

Ram Singh's ability to convert even a mundane utility structure into a piece of art with a clear architectural statement. The multifunctional structure, working as the entrance, porch and a bridge, fully conveys to the visitor, the quality of architecture to be expected, as he might move from one building to another. The Nurses' accommodation, a separate building, fits into the spatial composition with an excellent forecourt unfortunately marred now, by parking sheds on one side and lack of proper maintenance. The buildings are designed with verandas on the exterior, other than at points where the architect has given turrets to mark the ends. The massive exposed brick facades have been brought to a human scale using ornamental and molded bricks at the cornice, cill and parapet levels. The main entrance of the in-patient building is accentuated through an increase in height, cupolas to mark the front ends and an elaborate composition of openings and *jalliwork* at the upper level, visible from a distance. A lofty and noble dome, in serrated brickwork, sits atop the inner lobby of the in-patient block. Sandstone has been sparingly used, with brackets at the eaves of the porch and for the arched window overhangs, providing shade and climate protection. The overall massing of the buildings conveys solidity with accentuated ends of the building blocks. The lack of proper maintenance shows most clearly in the dilapidated condition of the dome.

Additions were later made to the Albert Victor Wing, with the construction of a new wing on the west side which was carried out during the years 1952-53, under the supervision of Mian Fazal Elahi, SDO of the PWD. This part of the building has a sub-basement floor for the services. The vocabulary and the style of the original building were retained in a fairly sensitive manner, showing full respect to Ram Singh's design. The difference in the two shows through minor details, when the later brick-making techniques could not replicate the delicate refinement of the original. The in-

patient building, which earlier stood apart, was also later joined with the Mayo Hospital main building with a somewhat crude infill.

Ram Singh may also have been involved in the design of other buildings of the Mayo Hospital and its attached medical college, which were constructed during the period under the supervision of the Executive Engineer, Rai Bahadur Ganga Ram. This assumption becomes credible as Ganga Ram frequently associated Bhai Ram Singh in the buildings constructed under his supervision. The Anatomy Block of the attached Medical School, later the King Edward Medical College, has a plaque that mentions the year 1892, presumably the date of the foundation stone. The block named the Faridkot Block, after the Maharaja of Faridkot, who financed the construction, was probably completed after Ram Singh returned from England in April 1893, and thus he was possibly involved in the design of the superstructure. The architectural vocabulary used for the Faridkot Block, bears great similarity to the Albert Victor Hospital and has the refinement of brick detailing reflective of other buildings known to have been designed by Ram Singh. His grasp of wood carving is echoed in the textured brickwork facades of the Faridkot Block of the Medical College.

Another commission of the years 1889-90 was the boarding house of the Government College, Lahore. The Principal, Dr. William Bell, referring to a circular sent by the Government,[155] wrote in his annual report of 1887-88 that 'a good boarding house system in close connection with the ordinary daily routine of College studies should produce more lasting moral influences upon our students

155. Report on the Government College Lahore by Principal, 1887-88, Appendix-A Pg viii) *Boarding House & Surroundings* Para 11

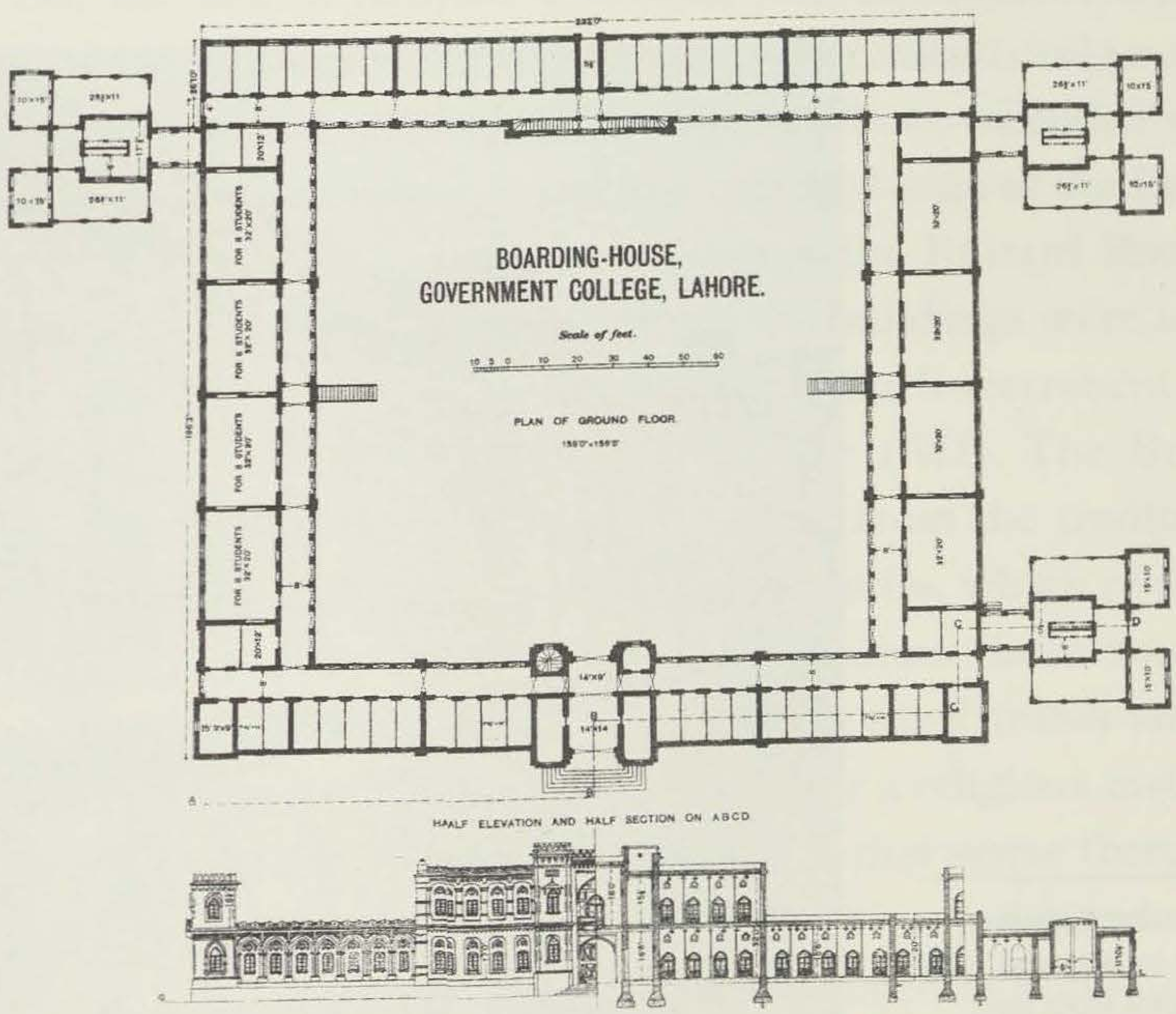
than moral text-books or moral lectures or any other devises whatsoever,' and that 'during the time the students attend our College, their daily lives should be completely under the superintendence of their teachers, who should have influence over them in their home-life, their debating societies, and sports, and private pursuits, no less than in their class work.'[156] The Principal was familiar with the works of the Mayo School and Ram Singh due to the public acclaim that the Punjab Chief's College project attracted, which included the boarding houses that had been completed and occupied by that time. Earlier the Mayo School had also designed furniture for the Government College. Ganga Ram, the Executive Engineer thus readily commissioned Ram Singh to design the Government College boarding house. The MVO Memorandum lists this work as one of the projects executed for Rai Bahadur Ganga Ram.

Earlier, the Government College students lived in two rented buildings outside the College campus. One was a bungalow belonging to the Maharaja of Kashmir, but the students later shifted to another building on Mozang Road. The second group lived in another rented structure on Government premises. It appears that it was the norm at the time to separate Muslim students and Hindu and Sikh students, as was the case at the Aitchison College; thus one of these rented buildings was for the Muslim students and the other for Hindu and Sikh students. Dr. William Bell had sought and obtained sanction from the Government for a hostel on the College premises, off the Mall, so that the students living in rented buildings could be moved to the College and brought under the direct influence of the teachers. By 1889-90 the plans and estimates for the new boarding house to be located behind the main college building, constructed in 1877, had received Government sanction. The first phase of the boarding house was quickly constructed and by 1891-92, the Principal reported that the boarding house had

156. ibid

been occupied, with seventy-eight students on the rolls.[157] Subsequent phases were completed in 1899 and 1904.[158]

The Government College boarding house, or the Quadrangle, was designed as a large partially double - storied structure with rooms around a central court. The inspiration for the courtyard plan may have been the traditional plan of a *serai* or house of the Punjab; however the name "Quadrangle" suggests that the prototype could well have been the quadrangles of the British universities, which were the model for educational buildings during the Raj. The boarding house was to have ninety-eight cubicles, eight dormitories, two sick rooms and the superintendent's quarters, containing one room for the office and two for his personal use. The toilets and bathrooms as well as the kitchens and dining rooms were to be provided separately for the Hindu and the Muslim students.[159] The dining / kitchen blocks had to provide for three kitchens and two dining rooms



IQBAL HOSTEL GOVERNMENT COLLEGE LAHORE

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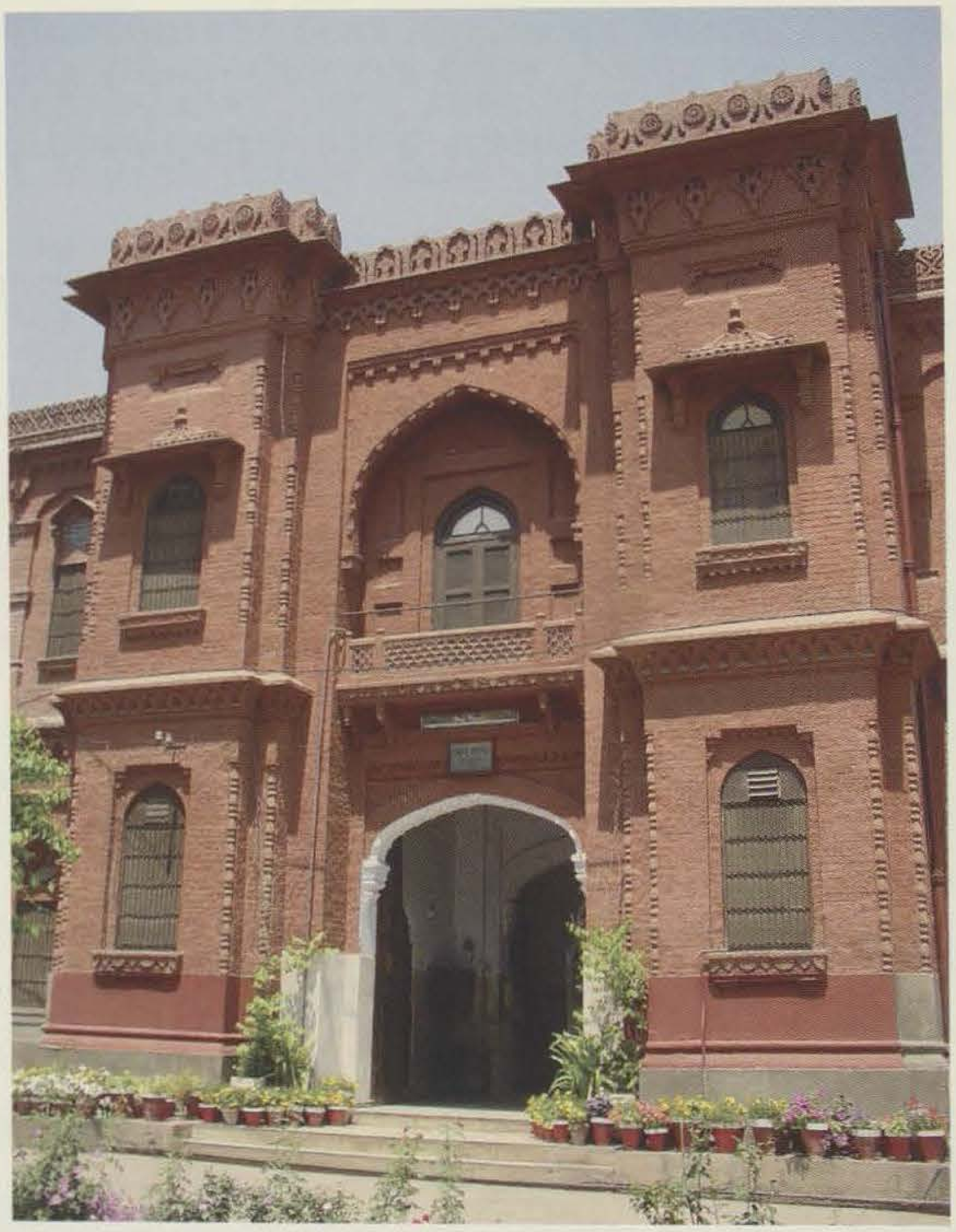
Government College, Lahore. Boarding house now Iqbal Hostel.

Education Building in India 1911.

157. Report on the Government College Lahore by Principal, 1891-92, Appendix-A Pg (v) Boarding House & Surroundings Para 9

158. Educational Buildings in India, op cit., page 41

159. ibid



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Government College, Lahore.

Iqbal Hostel, main entrance

each. The building was made in stages; in the first phase only three sides of the quadrangle were constructed while the ground floor of the remaining portion, the north side, was added in two stages in 1899 and 1904.

Ram Singh designed this building by placing the cubicles and dorms around a central courtyard with a veranda running along the courtyard. The front



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Government College, Lahore. Iqbal Hostel, view of entrance block from courtyard.

block and its parallel part at the rear, was double-storied, while the two remaining sides were designed as single - story structures so that the roof, accessed through an open staircase from the courtyard, could be used for the students to sleep outdoors during the summer months. A central double-height entrance was further enhanced through the use of ornamental brickwork and corners accentuated through increased heights. A balcony nestled at the upper level with a terracotta *jalliwork* balustrade. The warden's quarters were placed on the upper floor. The toilets were in separate blocks linked to the main building through covered walkways; one was meant for the use of Muslim students and the other for the Hindu and Sikh boys. This appears to be the order of the day, however, the Principal felt that 'the Mohammedan section will live in quarters apart from the Hindus although all reasonable opportunities should be provided for bringing them together socially.'[160]

By the time Bhai Ram Singh left for England in January 1891, at age 33, he had developed a mature and distinctive style of architecture as illustrated in the significant architectural projects that he carried out in the 1880-90 decade. These included some commissions of interior design, like the ceiling design of the Lalitha Mahal, Mysore, in 1882, and the interior of the Billiard Room at Bagshot Park. However, the majority of the buildings were in the field of education, including a "standard plan for Government high school buildings, Punjab" to be used by the PWD. The British educational system made a radical departure from the traditional educational infrastructure then prevalent in India, which revolved around a religious institution. For the Muslims there was the Madrissah attached or next to a mosque; for the Hindus similar education facilities were adjacent to a temple or a religious institute and similarly for the other religious groups. In that sense there was no system of secular education nor an education independent of religion. The colonial administration introduced schools for all

160. Report on the Government College Lahore by the Principal Appendix-A 1887-88 (Pg viii) Boarding House & Surroundings Para 11

sects, which did not segregate students on the basis of religion and in that sense the schools were secular. Nevertheless, the religious factor played an important role in the design of hostel facilities, which had long-reaching consequences, as the two communities drifted further apart through the educational process. The somewhat standard plan was a main hall with classrooms and offices attached. This usually took the shape of the letter I or H with the hall being the link between two rows of class rooms. Ram Singh maintained the plan as dictated by the new education system, variously using the I or the H configuration. His major contribution was the harmonious proportion of the different elements and the very rich texture that he endowed to the external surfaces with molded bricks and clever variations to create a bold effect of light and shade, making full use of the strong local sun.

On his return to the School on 1st April 1893, other commissions followed. The most significant of these was the design of the Khalsa College, Amritsar. The movement for the establishment of the Khalsa College began in 1883, when the General Singh Sabha,[161] the joint Board of the Shri Guru Singh Sabha, Amritsar (established 1873) and Shri Singh Sabha, Lahore (established 1879), later the Khalsa Diwan, Amritsar, adopted a resolution, on June 17 1883, for the establishment of the Khalsa College. Recognizing the nexus between religious reform and education, the Sikhs wanted to 'restore Sikhism to its pristine purity' and through publication of 'religious and historical books' spread 'current knowledge using Punjabi as a medium'.[162] Once the idea found official sanction, the establishment of the Khalsa College started taking shape. In February 1890, the Khalsa Diwan, Amritsar, established the Khalsa College Establishment Committee, which started earnest work towards this end. The newly constituted Committee appointed a sub-committee in it's first meeting of 22nd February 1890, with Col. Holroyd, the Director of Public Instruction as President, Sir

161. General Singh Sabha (established 1880) was the joint Board of the Shri Guru Singh Sabha, Amritsar (established 1873) and Shri Singh Sabha, Lahore (established 1879) which later became the Khalsa Diwan Amritsar.

162. Bajwa K.S. A Brief History of Khalsa College, Amritsar (1892-2003) page 20; Sikh History Dept. Khalsa College, Amritsar (2003)

Sardar Atar Singh as Vice president and Dr. W. Bell, the Principal, Government College, Lahore, as Secretary, along with five Sikh members. Col. Holroyd was already familiar with Ram Singh since the days when the Lahore School of Carpentry was started in the veranda of his office in 1874, and being the Director of Public Instruction, he was familiar with the work of Ram Singh, at the School of Arts, as well as in the various commissions that he had so well executed till then. While at the Government College, Lahore, Ram Singh had very recently designed the college boarding house.

The Sub-Committee was entrusted the task of searching for a suitable site and raising funds for the College. While the initial fund-raising efforts bore fruit, the selection of a suitable site was dogged with controversy and political maneuvering. One of the sites suggested by Mr. E. Nichol, the Secretary of the Amritsar Municipality, was Ram Bagh, in the middle of the city, which was considered inappropriate. Ram Bagh, with its extensive grounds, was the Amritsar residence of Maharaja Ranjeet Singh, the Lion of the Punjab, whose son Duleep Singh had been made a ward of the British and taken to Britain. Through the years 1886-88 he had been actively agitating for the undoing of the wrongs done to the Punjab and his person in the colonial annexation. The British perhaps feared that this would promote nationalistic attitudes, which may become politically dangerous, considering that the idea of setting up the College was itself a direct consequence of the movement in the Sikh community for acceptance of their separate cultural identity and the result of the language question that arose as a corollary.[163] The Lieutenant Governor was of the view that the site should be beyond 'the dangerous influences of city life' but at a convenient distance for 'the occasional visits of the Sikh

163. The Shri Guru Singh Saba, Amritsar, formed in 1873, the forerunner of the Khalsa Diwan was established with the express purpose of promoting the Sikh identity through publication of religious and historical material in the Punjabi language in *Gurmukhi* script. The joint Board of the Lahore and Amritsar Branches, the General Singh Sabha, first passed a resolution on June 17, 1883 for the establishment of the Khalsa College.

princes and gentlemen interested in the important object in view'.[164] The Khalsa Diwan of Lahore, and the Khalsa Diwan of Amritsar, each wanted the College to be in their respective cities. Both Diwans lobbied with the Lieutenant Governor, the officials, the Phulkian chiefs, the fund-raising sub-committees of the various districts and the Sikh community. The press was drawn in, signature campaigns organized and delegations deputed to meet the Phulkian chiefs and the Government officials. The Lieutenant Governor was approached, who set up a two-member survey party, which included Pandit Bansi Dhar, Drawing Master of the Engineering class at the Mayo School of Arts, Lahore, to inspect the five sites being proposed. The issue was finally resolved by the Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab, Sir James Lyall himself, who decided that the Khalsa College should be located in Amritsar in view of the 'fact that this is without doubt the wish of the great majority of the Sikh people'.[165] He concluded that amongst the five, the most suitable site for the College was the one located on the Grand Trunk Road, in the village of Said Mahmood, at a distance of about three miles from the city, and about two miles from the Railway Station, practically the site formerly selected for the jail. It was on the Cantonment side of the railway tracks, which in itself signified a cultural gesture, away from the city and being near the Cantonment. Thus the controversy was put to rest, in November 1891, with the selection of a site with a total area of 101.24 acres, finally purchased at a cost of Rs 10,000 in September 1893.[166] At the foundation laying ceremony on March 5, 1892, the Lieutenant Governor Sir James Lyall invoked tolerance among the various groups and urged them to work towards the common goal of establishing the Khalsa College, Amritsar.

The collection of funds had started as early as 1890, with the

164. Letter No 300, dated Lahore, 13 November 1891, J. Sime, Undersecretary to the Government of the Punjab, Home Department (Education) to Khalsa College Establishment Committee.

165. ibid

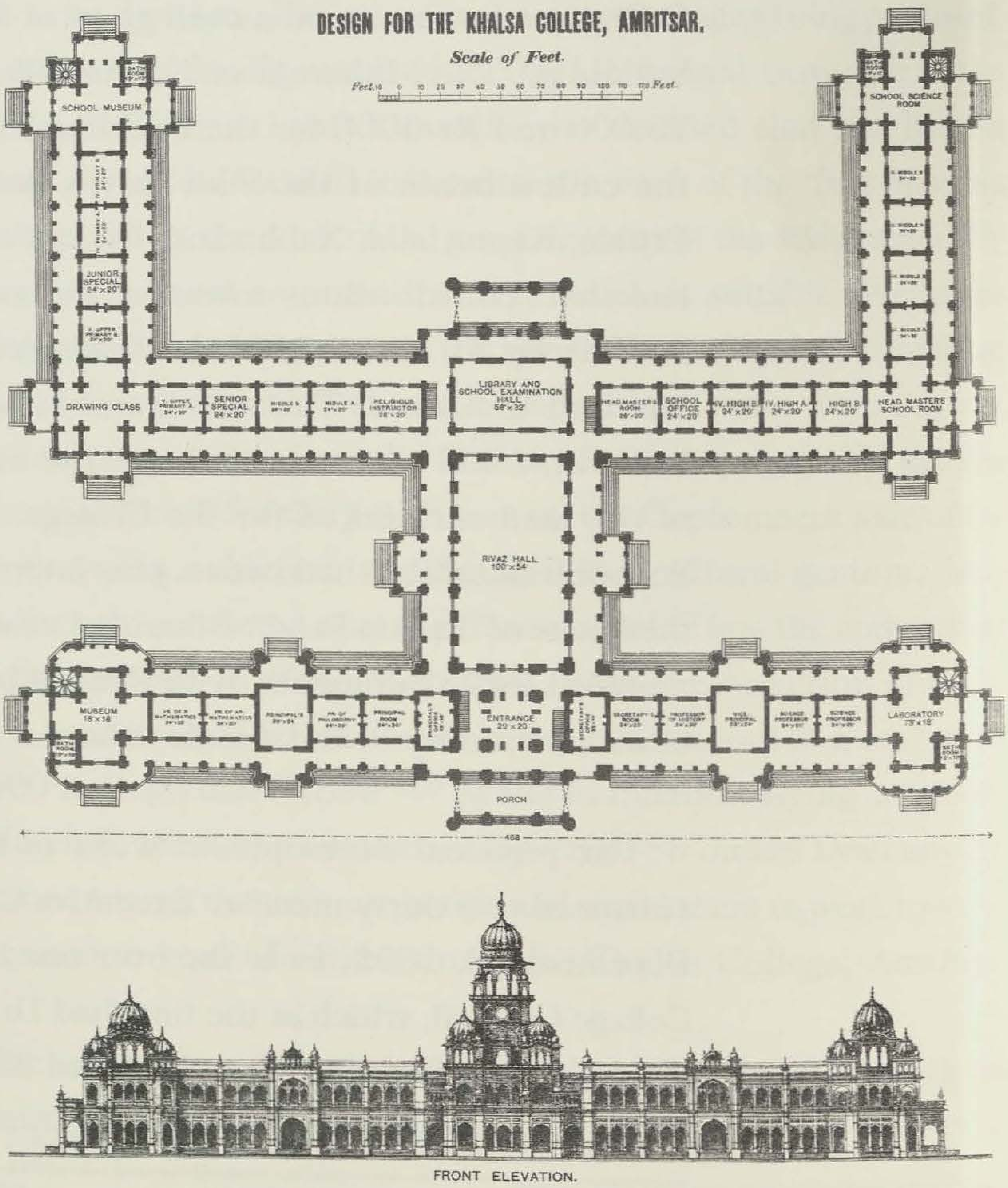
166. Title deed executed on 26 September 1893. Official entry dated 2 November 1893 under Book No.1 Part 263 pages 270-89. Quoted in Bajwa R.S., History of Khalsa College (2003)

formation of an influential deputation to request the chiefs of the Phulkian states for financial support, and sub-committees were formed at Patiala, Ludhiana, Ferozepur, Jullundar, Amritsar, Lahore, Gujranwala, Sialkot, Peshawar, Ambala, Gurdaspur, Rawalpindi and other places. A sub-committee was also formed in England on 16 March 1890, at the behest of a Mr. Frederick Pincott. The Khalsa College Committee appointed him as President, with Sir Charles Aitchison as Secretary; members included Baden Powell among other important persons.[167] The first to respond was the Maharaja of Patiala with a donation of Rs150,000 for the College endowment and a cash grant of Rs15,000 for the College buildings. The Maharaja of Nabha followed with a grant of Rs 75,000 and Rs 6000 for the Building Fund. By the end of 1892 the endowments of the Sikh states stood at Rs 452,000 with Patiala, Kapurthala, Nabha and Jind all contributing handsomely, and their contributions towards the building fund stood at Rs 94,000. By 31 March 1894 the fund grew to over Rupees Twelve hundred thousand. The construction of the College buildings, however, could not be started because of a delay in the purchase of the land earmarked for the College. Meanwhile, the Khalsa School was established over a year later on 22 October, 1893, in the house of the late Pandit Bihari Lal near the Hall Gate, Amritsar, rented at Rs 75 per month, with Punjabi being used as the medium of instruction up to the middle school.

The physical development work of the Khalsa College was entrusted to a thirty-member Executive Committee constituted on December 18, 1892, from the over one hundred member Khalsa College Council, which at the time had Dr. William H. Rattigan and Bhai Jawahir Singh as President and Secretary. Sardar Dharam Singh, Civil Engineer, was specially transferred from Bannu and

167. Patrons of the sub-committee were Lord Northbrook, Lord Rippon and Lord Dufferin, while members included Sir Pollard, Dr. Brown, Thornton, Baden Powell, Lindsay, General Abbot and Messers Hewlett and sons. Cited in Bajwa, K.S., *A Brief History of Khalsa College Amritsar (1892-2003)*

placed in charge of the building operations of the College. Bhai Ram Singh was still in England but he may have started working on this project before leaving for the Osborne House assignment in January 1891. Accounts of the time give conflicting dates as to when the first buildings of the College were designed and constructed, however from the dates of completion and occupation of the buildings, it can be deduced that they may well have been designed and executed after Bhai Ram Singh's return to India in April 1893. It was not till September 1896 that some of the buildings were



76

Khalsa College, Amritsar. Designed c1893.

Educational Buildings in India 1911.



77

Khalsa College, Amritsar. View from G.T. Road. The central part was reduced by one storey.

Photo by Umed Singh Gill



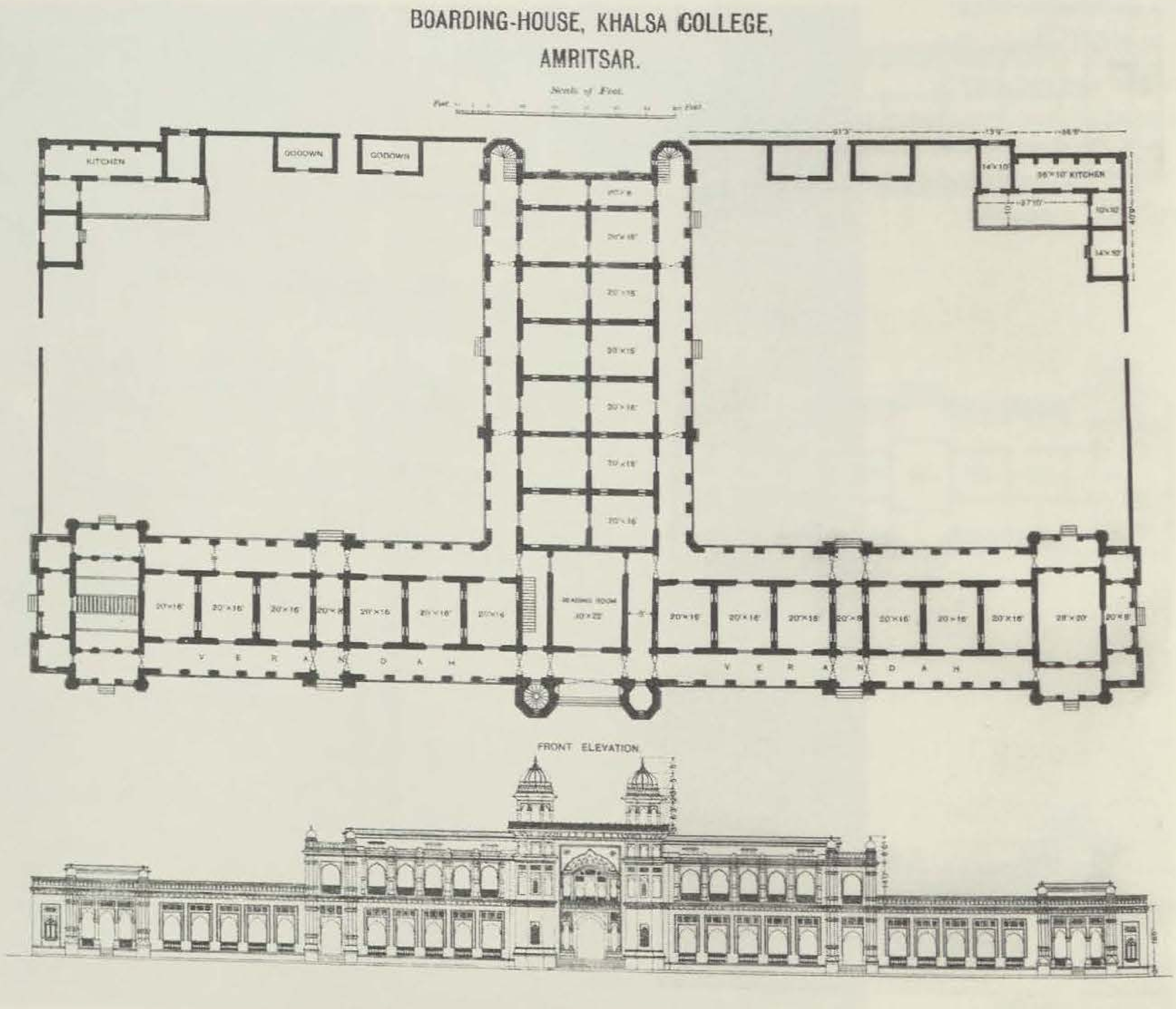
78

Khalsa College, Amritsar.

Photo by Umed Singh Gill

ready for the school students to be shifted from Pandit Behari Lal's house to the new premises. The first building to be occupied was the boarding house.

Ram Singh's master-plan proposed the main academic buildings of the College in the forefront, facing the Grand Trunk Road, with boarding houses at the rear. The Principal's residence, along with accommodation for other staff, was located on the southwest corner of the complex. The buildings were generously set back from the road and the foreground developed as spacious lawns. The College main building was to accommodate academic needs and thus was designed with a hall, classrooms, library, laboratories and ancillary facilities. The construction was planned in phases, and as the classes were already being held in rented buildings, priority in construction phasing was given to the boarding houses to provide



79

Khalsa College, Amritsar. Plan of one of the two boarding houses.

Educational Buildings in India 1911.



80
Khalsa College, Amritsar entrance to boarding house.

proper accommodation to the students from outside Amritsar.

The College boarding house, the Patiala House, for 250 students, was a gift of the Patiala officials and subjects, to mark the assumption of the Government of his state by Maharaja Rajindra Singh Mahipdar Bahadur. The boarding house was meant for 490 students. The plan of the School boarding house was an inverted T with a centralized entrance and six rooms (20 feet by 16 feet) flanking both sides of it, with large rooms of 28 feet by 20 feet at both ends, giving a frontage of 350 feet. Verandas, with *jalli* brickwork in the openings, on both sides protected the rooms from the scorching heat of the Punjab. The projecting portion of the T had another 12 rooms (20 feet by 16 feet),placed back to back in a row of six rooms each, again protected by verandas on either side. The building was double-storied with a large reading room above the entrance (40 feet by 22 feet). There were also student dorms and a two-room superintendent's quarter, with the remaining space left as terraces for students to sleep outdoors in the summer. The ground floor had a height of about

16 feet; with the first floor being 18 feet high, the overall height of the building was 42 feet from ground level. The central entrance was emphasized with the use of ornamental bricks, with turrets 67 feet high at each end. The monotony of the large frontage was broken by two small side entrances again emphasized through height and façade treatment. Eight kitchens with godowns and attached dining halls, toilets, a *dhobi ghat*, tube wells for the supply of drinking water and Persian wheels for supplying water to the toilets, were attached to the boarding house. The building was constructed at a cost of Rs70,000.[168] Later, additions were made and by 1911, double-storied blocks with verandas on the inner side, were added on both sides of the building, thus creating courtyards. Houses for the headmaster, the medical adviser and sixteen teachers were sited to the east of the boarding house along with quarters for the staff. The Patiala House was of similar design in plan and form but meant for 250 students only.

The boarding houses were completed sometime in 1896-897, for by September 1896, students were shifted from their temporary quarters in the city to the new premises. Apparently, because the accommodation built was more than needed for the number of students then on roll, teaching classes were also shifted to the boarding house as a temporary measure by the end of the year. In addition to the School, the College section was started on 18 May 1897 with an enrollment of seven students, using the boarding house as temporary premises. Thus the whole college began to function at site with boarding houses providing accommodation for residence as well as formal learning.

While work on the boarding houses was still underway, on 15 March 1896 the Executive Committee decided to add a

168. Educational Buildings in India op cit

Gurdawara/Dhramsala and one year later, on 6 March, 1897 they also decided to build a hospital and gymnasium as a memorial to Sardar Sir Attar Singh, the Vice President of the Khalsa College Council who had died recently. The Dhramsala was designed as a high open hall, large enough to seat 500 boys for morning and evening prayers, with ancillary rooms. It was constructed soon after, at the site where Sir James Lyall had earlier laid the foundation stone. Because of paucity of funds, due to the waning interest of the Sikhs and the chiefs, other buildings could not be taken in hand. At the time only four buildings had been constructed, the dhramsala, the school and college boarding houses and the Principal's house.

Hectic efforts were made, through the years 1902-03 to raise funds for completion of the essential buildings and for the endowment fund of the College with the Lieutenant Governor, Sir Charles Riwaz, patron of the College, himself joining the efforts with a contribution of Rs 50,000 from the Provincial Government revenues, towards the building fund, on his visit to the College on 15 August 1903. Lord Curzon, the Viceroy, joined the effort, urging the Phulkian states to contribute. The Government of the Punjab, approached the Sikh gentry through the Deputy Commissioners to provide financial help. The design for the Main Building and other structures, the gymnasium, dispensary, workshops and staff quarters was already prepared and estimated to cost Rs 2,50,000. The College organized the All India Sikh Conference on 12 May 1904 and used the occasion to raise funds. While the Phulkian states gave generously to the college building fund and the endowment, the Conference also adopted a resolution that all Zamidars pay 6 piasa on every rupee of their Government revenue. Thus, by the close of the financial year 1904-05 Rs 328,480 had been collected.

On 17 November 1904, Sir Charles Riwaz preformed the foundation laying ceremony of the Main building. Ram Singh, who at the inception of the project, was still a non-gazetted drawing master, was now the substantive Vice-Principal of the Mayo School having attained this position on 1 December 1896. At the ceremony, the drawings of the project were displayed prominently and much admired by the Lt. Governor and the visiting gentry. The Main Building was designed, to accommodate 1800 students, with the College facilities on the front side of an essentially H-shaped building, with the School facilities at the rear, the connector of the H-shape being a large hall, 100 feet by 54 feet, named the Riwaz Hall in honor of the patron. By attaching two wings at the rear of the H-shaped building, additional facilities were provided for the school. The building was a monumental structure, about 500 feet in length (frontage), with a prominent central entrance leading to the foyer and the hall beyond. Other entrances dotted the façade with two prominent entrances at the ends. The building was double-storied; the central entrance was surmounted with a composition of domes at a maximum height of 116 feet with a four-sided clock with six foot dials. The building had been originally designed to be higher but one story was later reduced. At the ends of the front part of the building, there were large cross-shaped rooms surmounted by a cluster of domes to a maximum height of 63 feet. A veranda 10 feet wide ran along all sides of the building with multi-foil arches in brick, with brackets at the cornice level and the parapet. Small open or dead arches were used at the parapet level to create a lyrical play of light and shade that added to the composition of domes, *palkis* and finials used throughout the building. The monotony of the long verandas was broken using multi-foil brick arches running across, and the exposed brickwork of the jack - arched ceiling. The building, however, took several years to complete, the cost having

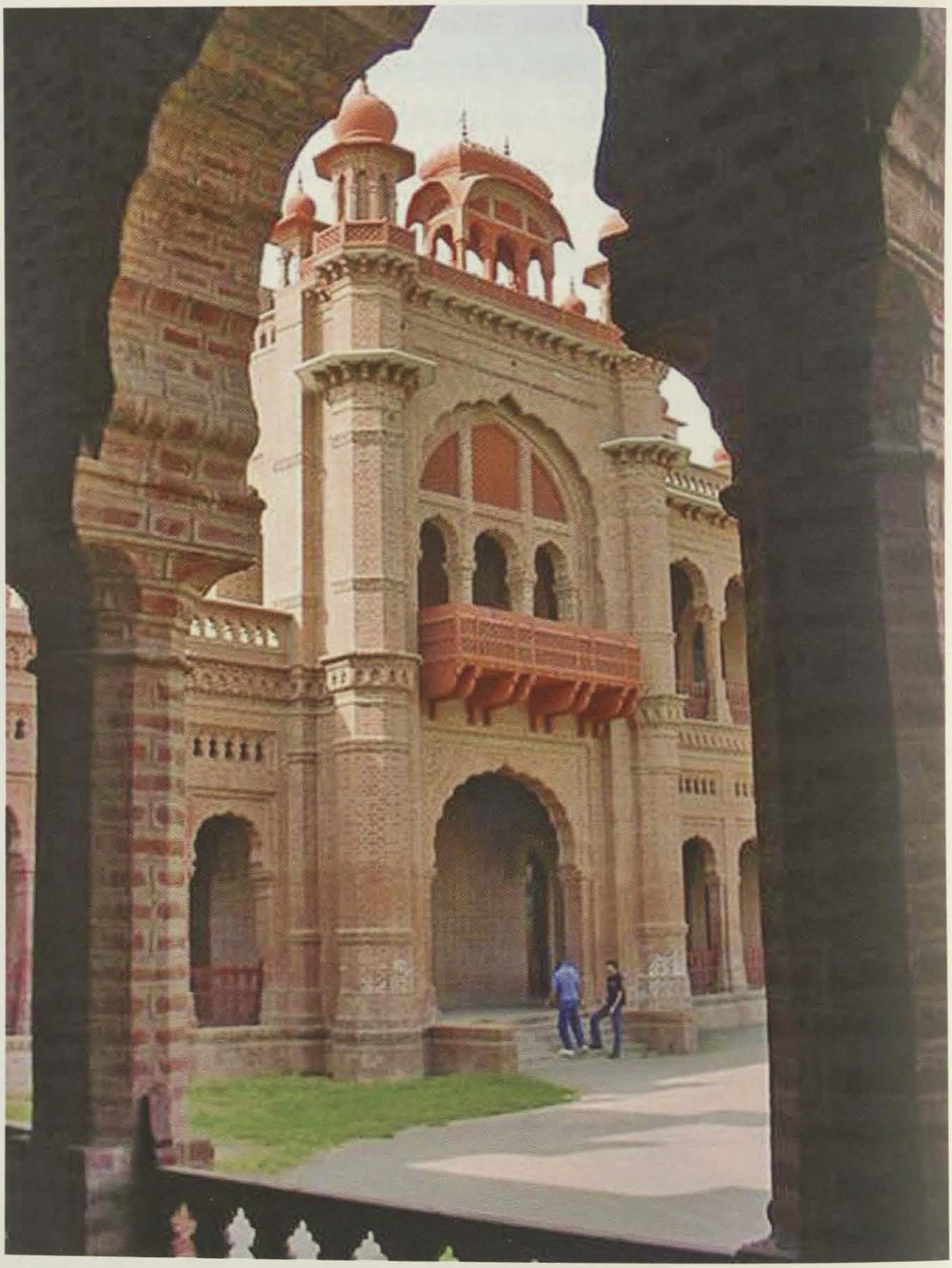
appreciated to over Rs. 500,000. It was largely completed by October 1910 and occupied by 9 October 1910, but there was still work to be done and the Principal was still collecting money for it in 1916, the year that Bhai Ram Singh died.

In addition to the Main Building, other buildings designed by



82

Khalsa College, Amritsar.
Entrance School wing.



Bhai Ram Singh, were also constructed during the early 1900s. A dispensary named the Rattigan[169] Memorial Dispensary was erected in 1905 at a cost of Rs 2,900; twenty-five houses for teachers were constructed in 1911, and a separate block for the science laboratories and a post office were constructed during the same period.

169. Born in Delhi, Founder President, Rattigan was a prominent lawyer of Lahore who rose to be a judge. (*Dictionary of Indian Biography*)

The establishment of the Khalsa college focused Sikh nationalist sentiment towards preservation of their identity in the use of Punjabi as a medium of instruction. The British fearful as ever about 'native disturbances', soon interfered directly and took over the management of the College from the Council and gave it to a Management Committee with power concentrated in the Principal and vast authority given to the Governor of the Province. The Principal was always British and ensured that the nationalist sentiment did not go beyond limits. The history of the construction of the College was thus affected and it bespeaks the underlying conflicts with the British colonists, which finally came to a point where the Government took over the management of the College in 1906. On 25 January 1907 the honorary services of Sardar Dharam Singh, the sikh supervising engineer, were dispensed with and Mr. Ducome Smith, Chief Engineer, PWD was entrusted with the task of finding a suitable replacement. The College had become quite a center of dissent with students demonstrating that a Sikh who understood the concept of *Sewa* or service should be appointed, and not a European engineer of the PWD.[170] Ultimately in July 1908 Sardar Balwant Singh, an Assistant Engineer, took charge of the construction.

The design of the Khalsa College constituted the high point of Bhai Ram Singh's career as an architect and through this project he was able to explore a vocabulary which he used to good advantage in his later works, like the Punjab University Senate Hall (1905) and the Islamia College, Peshawar (1912-13), which he is reputed to have designed, and the Khalsa College, Gujaranwala, where presumably the Amritsar design was adapted. The major development he carried through from the Khalsa College is his articulation of

170. Singh, Ganda ; *A History of the Khalsa College*, Amritsar p 67
Quoted in *Sikhs of the Punjab* p 61

the skyline of his buildings. His earlier attempts, such as in the School of Arts building, appear hesitant, or as in Aitchison College, a bit crowded, in comparison to the masterful use of the cupolas, domes, *chatris, palkis* that he employed to great effect in the Khalsa College design. The central clock tower made an appearance as the focal point of the façade composition which he used later in the Punjab University Hall.

83

Punjab University, Lahore
Southern facade

Educational Buildings in India 1911.

The Works of the 1900s

Although the Khalsa College project, started in 1892-1893, kept Ram Singh occupied till his death in 1916, he was commissioned to design other major projects as well during the 1900s. Bhai Ram



SENATE HOUSE, LAHORE



84

Punjab University, Lahore. Main Building constructed in 1905.

Singh by this time had a sizeable portfolio with several important institutional buildings to his credit. On the Mall alone there were three prominent buildings designed by him, the Museum, the Mayo School of Arts and the Aitchison College. The Punjab University, Lahore, established in 1882, commissioned him to design the University Hall in 1905, and five years later, in 1910, the University Library.

The Campus of the Punjab University, on the Mall, was a dominating presence, however, its main entrance was from the Kutchery Road, which led to the Senate Hall, a gift of the Nawab of Bahawalpur, constructed in 1876, under supervision of Rai

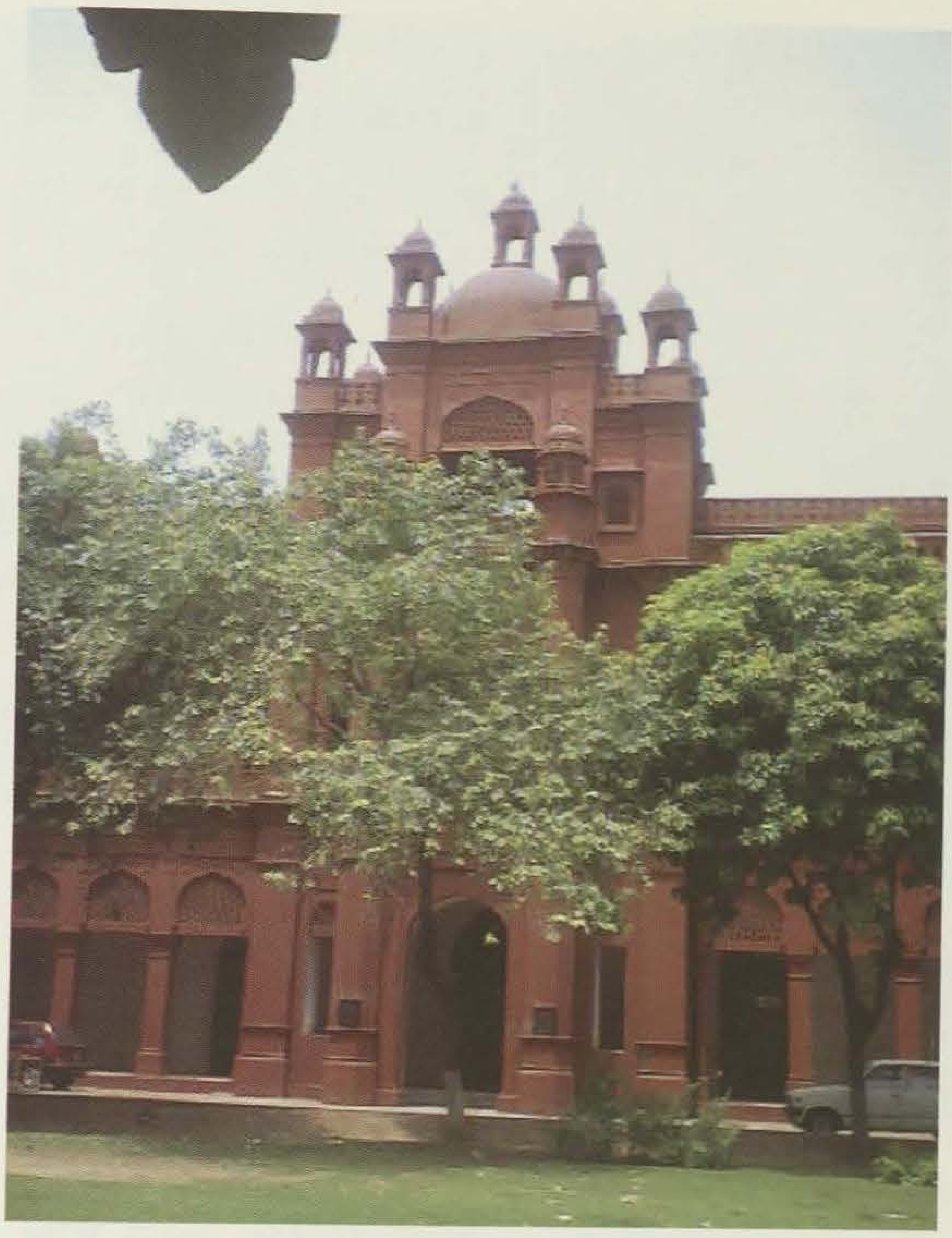
Bahadur Kanhiya Lal, Executive Engineer PWD. In 1905, when the University Hall was constructed, its presence on the Mall became a legible reality and it achieved its definitive physical magnificence. Sir Charles Montgomery Riwaz, K.C.S.I., the Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab, laid the foundation stone in 1905, and the work was completed within the year.[171] A plaque on the building, which still exists, acknowledges the architect, Bhai Ram Singh and the Executive Engineer H.M. Baines.

The University Hall was located on a parcel of land of about 3 acres, along the Mall. It was sited with a generous setback from the main road, with two gates and a carriageway leading to the centrally placed portico and the main entrance. A soaring clock tower 65 feet high above the vestibule accentuated the entrance. The external areas were landscaped with a fountain prominently placed in the center of the garden. The building had a frontage of about 225 feet and about 95 feet on the side, the main hall being about 150 feet by 60 feet wide and 38 feet high, with a double-storied wing attached to the Eastern and Western sides. The building had a double-storied veranda, 10 feet wide and 17 feet high, which ran along all the four sides. The total ground area was about 24000 square feet. Later in about 1935, two wings were attached to the Eastern and Western sides giving the building its present U-shape. The University Hall was meant to be used as an examination hall and for convocations, and had a balcony at the first floor level, which could be used by the women attending the Convocation.[172] Internally the wall surfaces were decorated with 'oil paint and distemper',[173] although now no traces of it can be seen. The stone brackets beneath the balcony, the decorative wooden balustrade and the wooden floor and ceiling completed the interior composition of the Hall. Externally, Bhai Ram Singh used the vocabulary developed in the Khalsa College main building, with a

171. *Educational Buildings in India*, 1911, p 45

172. ibid

173. ibid

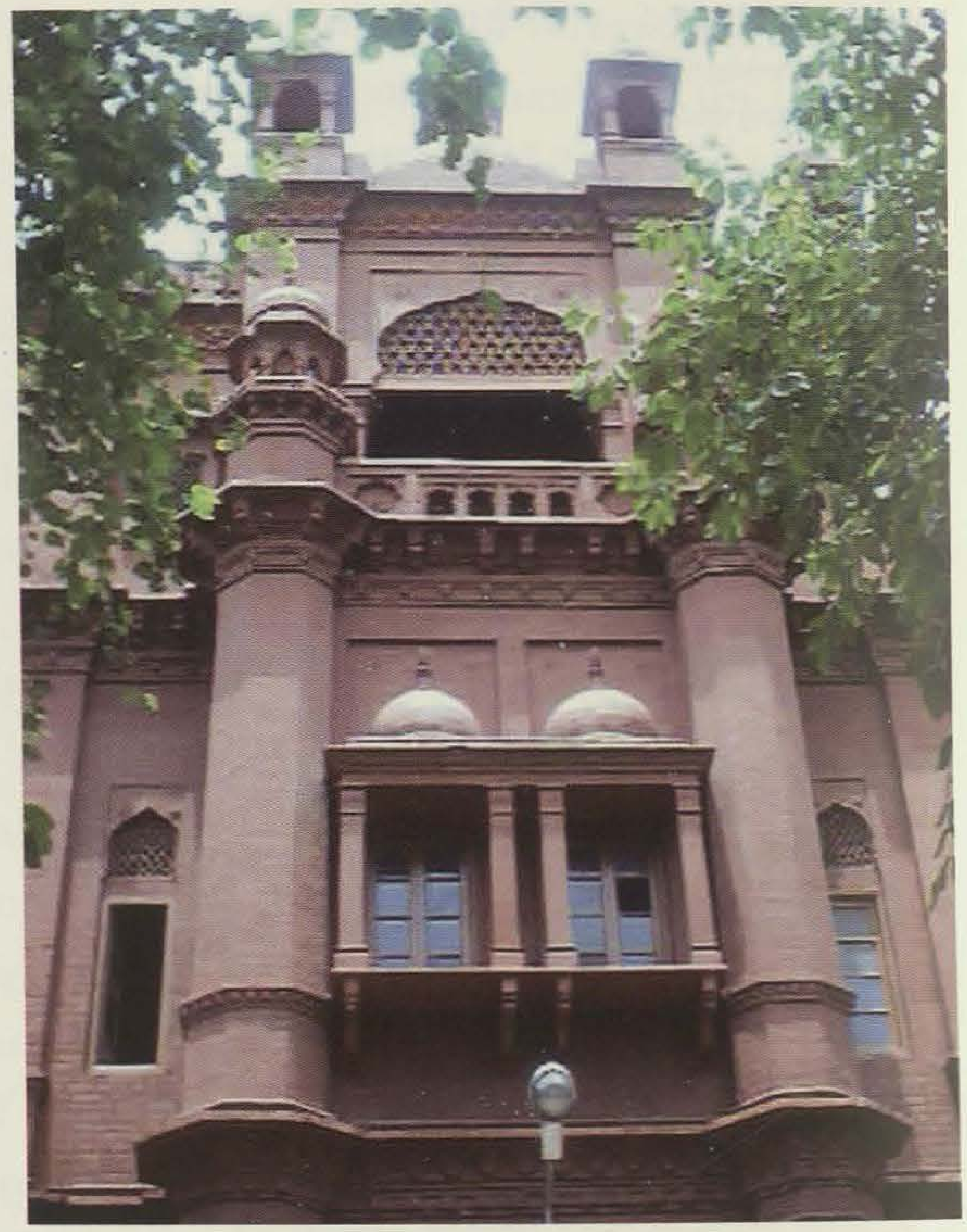


85

Punjab University, Lahore. Library Building designed 1910.

highly articulated and textured brick surface achieved through the use of different sized bricks and ornamental bricks, with terracotta *jallis* in the multi-foiled arched openings of the veranda, and wooden balustrades. The building had the entrances accentuated by increasing the height and with the use of *jarokhas* supported on sandstone brackets and other such decorative features, while the corners were emphasized with an increase in height achieved by placing the spiral staircase at each corner of the veranda surrounding the building. Cupolas and domes on the roof of the building gave a varied, lyrical and confident skyline.

The west and east wings had three rooms on the ground floor and the first floor, used as offices for the examination staff with one of the rooms being the lavatory; the upper floor of the east wing had the University Library. The Library being no more than a room about 1800 sq feet was soon inadequate for the growing number of students and the University soon required a separate building to house a full fledged University Library. In 1910 the Syndicate acquired a parcel of land, along the Kutchery Road towards the north; behind the University Hall and contiguous to the Senate



86

Punjab University, Lahore. Library Building.

Hall. Bhai Ram Singh who was by now the Principal of the Mayo School, was approached to prepare the design. The foundation stone was laid by the Chancellor, the Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab, Sir Louis Dane on 27 February 1911, thus presumably the library design was prepared through the year 1910. This was a double-storey structure with large reading rooms, stack areas and other ancillary rooms protected by verandas running along the outer periphery. The building was completed in two phases. The first phase was formally opened by the Chancellor on 27 February 1912,[174] whereas the second phase was started at the end of 1915, after the retirement of Bhai Ram Singh, and completed in February 1917, after his death. The Library was designed with the same lyrical brickwork exterior, the corners accentuated through the use of *chatris*, cupolas and domes; There was a centrally placed porch leading to the Reading room, and terracotta *jalli* work in the multi-foiled arched veranda openings, with the cornices emphasized through use of layered ornamental bricks. The side entrances were also emphasized through the use of Bhai Ram Singh's favorite design devices, increased height, *jarokas* and ornamental bricks.

174. Bruce, J.F (1933); *A History of the University of the Punjab*, Lahore p 132

87

Agriculture College, Lyallpur (now Faisalabad) view from the rear. Designed 1906.



The other important architectural works of the period were the buildings for the Agricultural College at Lyallpur, now Faisalabad (1906-1908); the Queen Mary College Main building and dispensary (1910); the new building for Pandit Baijna High School, outside Hall Gate, Amritsar(circa 1912-13), now the Government Art and Craft Teacher Training *Sanste;* and projects for the princely states as well as some other smaller projects, including a show room at Amritsar were mentioned in the Memorandum, and the Bank of Punjab building in Anarkali Lahore.

The buildings for the Agriculture College at Lyallpur, now the Agriculture University Faisabalad, were designed in 1906. These included the two academic buildings completed in about 1908 and a boarding house. The main academic area comprised two buildings, one of which had the main hall, the museum, classrooms, offices and other ancillary rooms, while the other was the laboratory

building. The two buildings, with the classroom block in front and the laboratories at the back were configured to create an open court area between the buildings with walkways connecting the two. The front main building, facing north was set back from the internal college road, thus creating a magnificent setting for the building. A centrally placed portico led to the main hall, which is now the College Museum, but was designed as the examination/ assembly hall. The detailing of the Hall shows that it was designed to have a false ceiling which was however not affixed. Attached to the hall on either side were classroom blocks and beyond, another set of attached blocks to house the offices and additional classrooms. Thus the building acquired the shape of an I with the Hall placed as a central knob bisecting the I. Verandas wrapped around the ends of the I and along the rear, providing covered walkways and protection from the scorching heat. The attached classroom blocks had an 8 foot double-loaded corridor, lit through skylights, with classrooms on both sides; doors connected the corridor to the Hall. The corners of the Hall were accentuated with hexagonal turrets surmounted with chatris. The building has the typical features of Bhai Ram Singh's design, the tiered/ layered effect achieved through the varying heights of the veranda, the rooms and the hall, a highly articulated and textured brick exterior, rich in details using ornamental and molded bricks. The trabeated arched openings of the verandas were delineated with sandstone lintels and brackets, while the cornices, the parapet and the window sills were accentuated with ornamental bricks. Sandstone eaves resting on sandstone brackets run all along the building, highlighting the roofline, which was surmounted by *chatris* in the case of the Hall and cupolas to mark the two remaining tiers. The ventilators, along the front of the building, beneath the eaves, were also accentuated with ornamental details in plaster, while the plinth level had carved sandstone detailing. For the rear building with the large-sized laboratories and attached facilities there were the same details and



88

Queen Mary College, Lahore. Main Building designed 1910.

vocabulary as used in the front building, thus integrating the two buildings as one architectural statement. The entire composition was designed to create visual interest, while fulfilling the functional needs of the College. While the academic buildings were under construction a boarding house and a few houses for the staff were also constructed. The boarding house appears to be designed by Bhai Ram Singh as it has the typical articulation and careful brick detailing, that mark his design.



89

Queen Mary College, Lahore.

The other commission of 1910 was the buildings of the Queen Mary College, Lahore. The predecessor of the College was a private school, which started around 1908 as the Victoria May School. This was located in three rented buildings on Hall Road, two used as hostels for teachers and students and one for classroom. The Government took over the Victoria May School and renamed it the Queen Mary College. It was meant to provide a school for girls on lines similar to the Aitchison College, for children of the native rulers, chieftains and gentry. The Government proceeded to construct a suitable building on a site of about 21 acres on Durand Road. The Lieutenant Governor gave his wholehearted support to the cause. Ram Singh who was then the Officiating Principal of the Mayo School during the absence of Percy Brown was asked to prepare the design of the Main Building. By August 1910 the design of the Main Building was fairly advanced and Ram Singh was being pressured to complete the task. Communication from the Education Department, by telegram and letters expressed the urgency of the commission. In a letter dated August 26, 1910, from the Education Department, Punjab, Bhai Ram Singh was informed that the Lieutenant Governor wanted a 'general idea of the elevation' and 'with these modified instructions can you say when we may expect to receive the project'[175] The wife of the Lieutenant Governor, Lady Dane laid the foundation stone on 17 November 1911 and the buildings were constructed through the years 1911-1912.

The College Main building was designed with classes on the ground floor and a boarding house on the first floor. The layout was simple with essentially three blocks placed in a U-shape encompassing an open area at the rear. The central part of the U had the double-storied Main block which had a hall flanked by classrooms placed back to back and connected to each other through

175. Letter, from Education Department Punjab to Bhai Ram Singh, Principal, Mayo School of Arts dated 26 August 1910.

glass-paned doors. Attached to this block were two single-storied blocks on either side, set back from the main block and forming the two wings of the U-shape. While the east block had classrooms placed back to back, the west wing housed the administration offices with some additional classroom space. verandas ran along the outer sides of the building connecting the three blocks. Staircases, encased in corner octagonal turrets, marked the front ends of the centre double-storey block which led to the boarding house above. The roof terraces had high parapets so that the girls could sleep outdoors during the hot summer nights. The building was set back from the main road with a centrally placed portico leading to the hall; an entrance with its own portico was placed on the west side leading to the administration wing. A separate toilet block was placed at the rear of the east wing. Later another floor was built on the east wing giving the building its present form.

The vocabulary of the building is reminiscent of some of the other buildings designed by Bhai Ram Singh, such as the Punjab University Library and Hall. The exposed brickwork building is highly articulated with terracotta *jaliwork* infills resting on sandstone lintels in the arched opening of the surrounding veranda; the wooden railings in geometric patterns used at the ground and upper levels to partially close openings where exits were not desirable, further enhance the refined detailing which was Bhai Ram Singh's forte. *Chatris*, cupolas, accentuated entrances, defined edges and the façade broken into segments, create the lyrical composition which is the mark of Bhai Ram Singh's architecture.

The infirmary, a detached building sited at the rear of the west wing , was designed and built simultaneously. The exquisite little building with eight sickrooms and attached baths was designed to

reflect the detailing of the main block. The building has verandas surrounding the exterior, while an internal court provides the privacy and isolation to the infirmary which was very essential at the time.

While commission work seemed aplenty, Bhai Ram Singh continued to reach various milestones at the Mayo School as well. On his return to Lahore, after completing the Osborne House project, Ram Singh had been appointed as Drawing and Carpentry Master, a gazetted position, on 15 October 1894; he was given simultaneous charge as officiating Vice-Principal, till his substantive appointment to this post on 1 December 1896. Another two years later, on 12 March 1898, Ram Singh was made officiating Principal, when F.H. Andrews, who had succeeded Kipling as Principal, went on furlough to England, for one year, one month and twenty-nine days.[176] Andrews decided not to return to India and Bhai Ram Singh, under the circumstances expected to be made substantive Principal and appealed to the Government regarding this; however, Percy Brown was appointed Principal and Bhai Ram Singh was reverted to his substantive position of Vice Principal. This must have been a disappointment for Ram Singh; however, at the time he was much in demand in official circles as a designer and architect, with several commissions in hand which must have provided some comfort.

Several of these commissions came from the Princely States. Following the royal commissions, the Punjab Chiefs were understandably keen to emulate the Sovereign, and Ram Singh was called upon by almost all the states for interior works of their Durbar Halls, with some prodding by the Lieutenant Governor. Sir Denis Fitzpatrick, the Lt. Governor, Punjab, (1892-97) in his speech at the opening of the Punjab exhibition in 1893, held at the

176. Gazette notification No. 24 & 25, dated 2 March 1898

inauguration of the Lahore Museum, declared 'I, following in a very much humbler manner, the example set by Her Majesty, lately requested the same artist to prepare a design for decorating the drawing room at Government House here, which is, I would venture to say, the ugliest room of its size in British India. His design was beautiful and his estimates moderate Rs12,000 or Rs14,000, but I much regret to say that in the present state of the provincial finances it is impossible to spare this amount of money, and it is very much to be feared that this work cannot be carried out for many years to come.'[177] He went on to say that there were, however, many Chiefs who had the means to engage Bhai Ram Singh to design their durbar halls and drawing rooms. While money was still being arranged for the Governor's drawing room, Bhai Ram Singh was engaged for some smaller assignments such as the screens and tables for the Governor's house in the year 1894.[178]

Over the years, Bhai Ram Singh and the Mayo School appear to have been continuously involved with some assignment or the other at the Governor's house in Lahore. A new double-storied wing, on the south side, had been added to the residence in 1892, which included a Durbar Hall, ADC quarters and additional bedrooms. In the year 1893, some interior works were carried out, including the wooden paneling for the ceiling and walls and a projecting window paneled in carved wood facing south of the first floor Durbar Hall in 1893. Through subsequent years Bhai Ram Singh continued to be given various assignments at the Governor's House, Lahore and at his summer residence, Barnes Court (now the Raj Bhawan) at Simla[179-182]. As can be expected, there appears to have been always great urgency attached to the Governor's commissions and Ram

177. Extract of the Speech of the Lt. Governor of the Punjab at the Punjab Exhibition of 1893, reproduced in MVO Memorandum.

178. Letter marked Barnes Court, 23 September 1894 from Private Secretary to Lt. Governor to Bhai Ram Singh.

179. Letter from Education Department, Punjab, to Bhai Ram Singh marked Ellerslie, Simla, 19 August 1909.

180. Letter from Private Secretary's Office, Punjab, to Bhai Ram Singh marked Barnes Court Simla, 25th November1908.

181. Letter from Private Secretary's Office Punjab to Bhai Ram, Singh marked Barnes Court Simla, 30th May.1902

182. Letter from Private Secretary's Office Punjab, to Bhai Ram Singh, marked Barnes Court Simla, 8th May1899.

Singh was frequently summoned to Barnes Court in connection with some assignment or the other. In the correspondence of the year 1903 between the Private Secretary and Bhai Ram Singh, plans of the drawing room at Barnes Court were sent back and forth with changes marked in red ink' till finally the private secretary communicated, 'You will see that most of the work has finally been approved...'[183] Other officials also sought Ram Singh's services. In 1900, he designed and prepared the pulpit[184] for the Vice-Regal Lodge(now the Indian Institute of Advanced Studies) at Simla. Three years later, in 1903, when Lord Kitchener was the C-in-C, Ram Singh was assigned the interior design for the new drawing room of Snowdone[185] which included an elaborate ceiling and wood carving for the doors and a carved wooden fireplace. The Duke of Connaught also assigned him several works of interior design and furniture pieces following the project of the interior design of the Billiard Room at Bagshot Park in 1884-88.



90

Durbar Hall, Kapurthala. Interior designed 1905.

183. Letter from Private Secretary's Office Punjab, to Bhai Ram Singh, marked Barnes Court Simla 22 July 1904.

184. Letter from Private Secretary's Office, to Bhai Ram Singh, marked Vice Regal Lodge Simla, 15 July 1900

185. Letter from Private Secretary's Office to Bhai Ram Singh, marked Lt. Governor's Camp, Punjab, 23 June 1903.



91

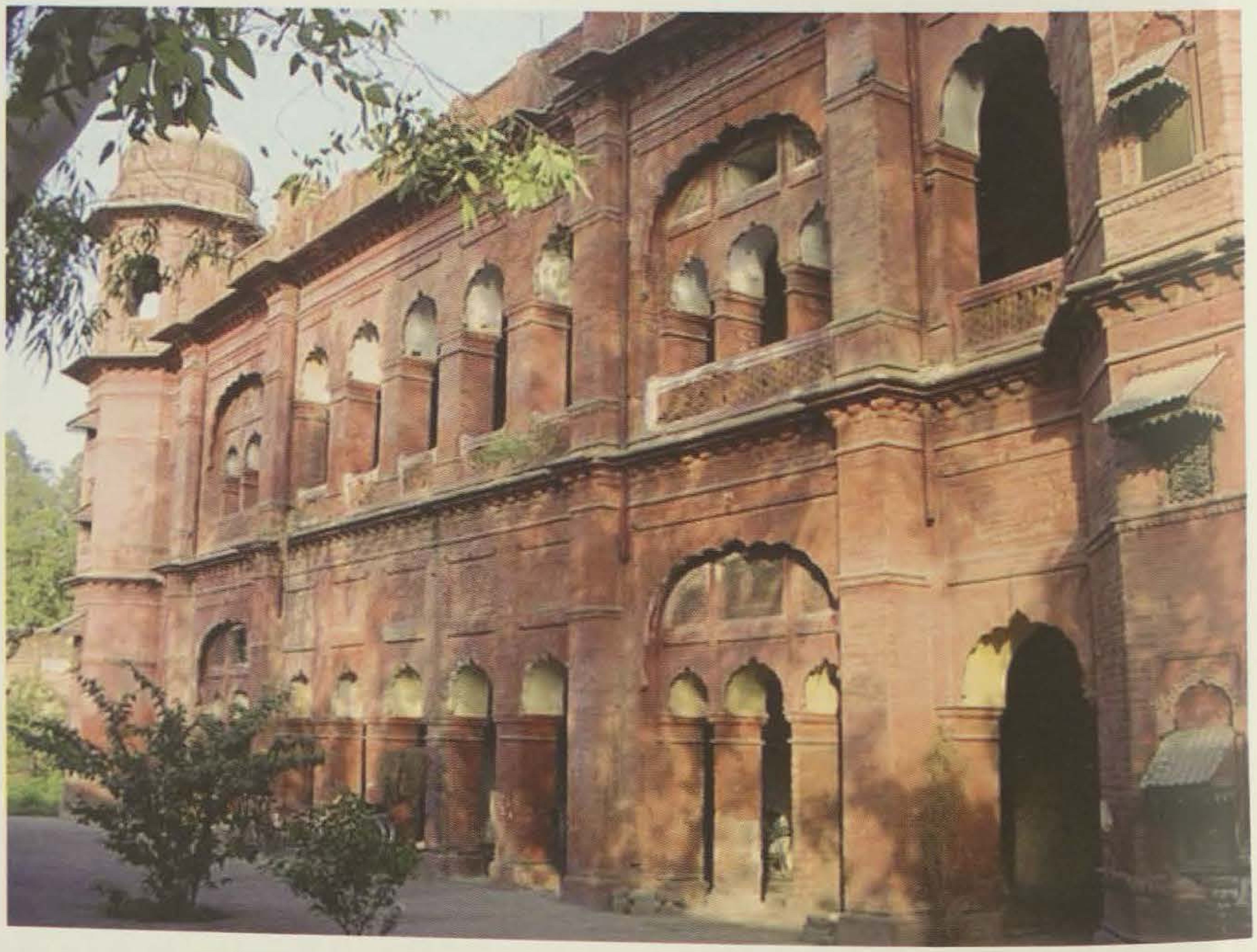
Durbar Hall, Kapurthala. Interior view of entrance lobby.

The Punjab Chiefs, taking a cue from the Empress and the Lt. Governor, rediscovered the architect in their backyard and vied for the services of Bhai Ram Singh, and continued to employ him henceforth till his death. After his passing away, work continued to flow to his firm *Bhai Ram Singh MVO and Sons,* which was managed by his sons who continued to be commissioned to carry out interior works. Before the royal commission, Bhai Ram Singh had earlier, in 1882, prepared the ceiling design of the Lalitha Mahal, Mysore, and on his return, a number of durbar hall interiors were entrusted to him. These included the Durbar Halls at Kapurthala (1905),[186] Patiala (1903), Maler Kotla (1909), Nabha (1903); the ceiling of the Green hall in Jammu and Kashmir State (1912), and the Durbar Hall at Peshawar (1902). Each wanted to imitate the "oriental design" popularized by the royals. The Raja of Maler Kotla wanted a room done in 'plaster of Paris work in the Oriental design' and 'designs of the Indian style'[187] as did the other chiefs. The

186. Letter No. 25, from State Engineer, New Palace Works, Kapurthala to BRS, Vice Principal MSA dated 19 January 1905.

187. Letter from Private Secretary to Sardar Sahib Ram Singh to Principal MSA dated Maler Kotla 10 June 1909.

Nawab of Bahawalpur wanted to commission Ram Singh to prepare designs for the Bahawalgarh Palace and a Club House in the state. Correspondence between the offices of the Lt. Governor and the Nawab ensued. In a letter dated 2 July 1904, the Political Agent wrote to the Chief Secretary of Bahawalpur State that 'the Lieutenant Governor has no objection to permitting Bhai Ram Singh to help in preparing designs for the Bahawalgarh Palace and the Club House on condition that he shall before commencing the work complete the two tasks on which he is now engaged, viz. the decoration of the new Legislative Council Room at Lahore, and the preparation of the details in the plans of the Khalsa College at Amritsar. These tasks I understand will probably occupy Bhai Ram Singh for some time and it is for His Highness the Nawab to decide, after enquiry from Bhai Ram Singh, whether he is prepared to wait until they are completed.'[188] Shortly afterwards on 12 July, Muhammad Din, the Chief Secretary of the State, wrote to Bhai Ram Singh, asking him

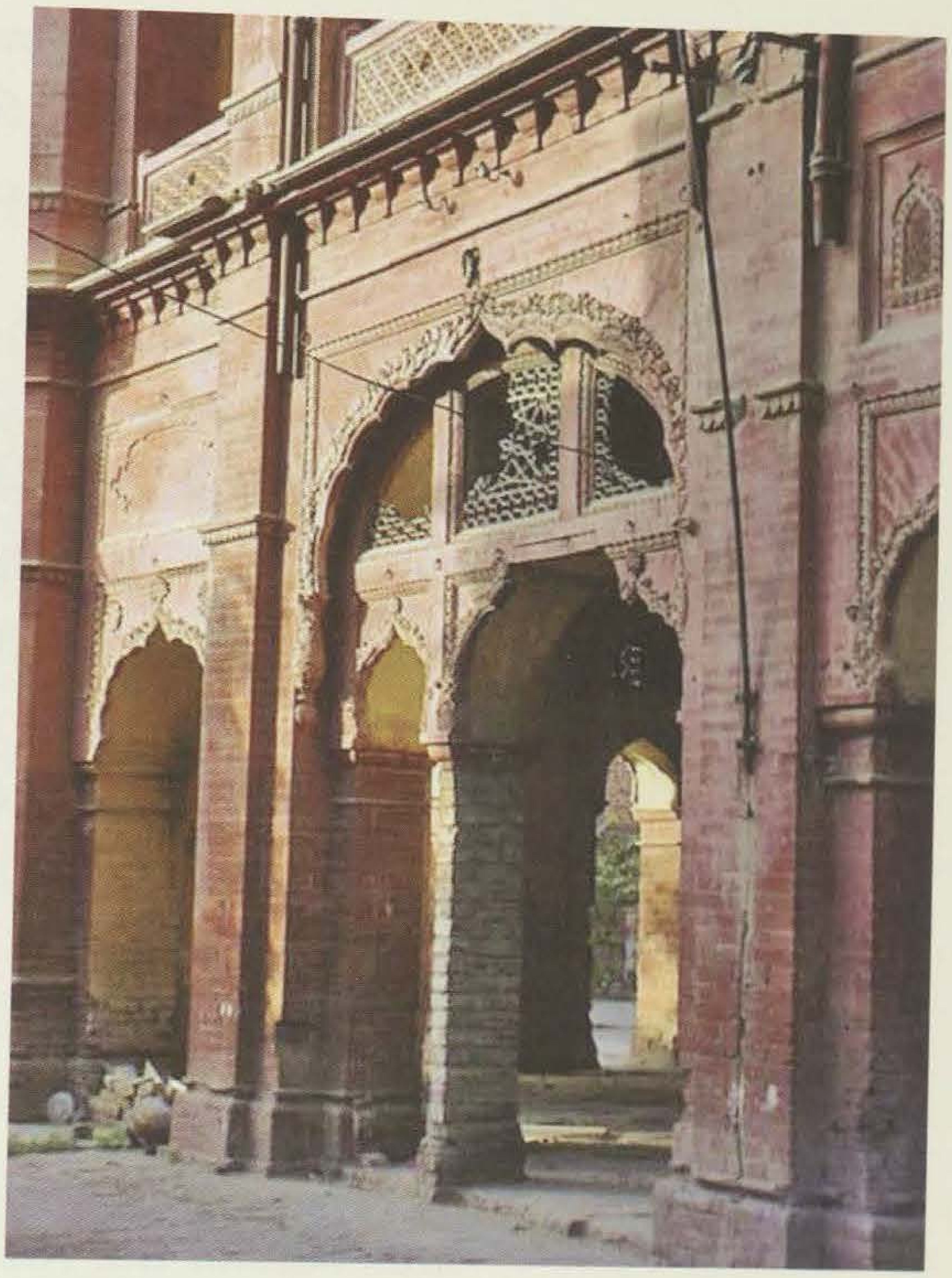


92

Lal Kothi, Nabha.
Designed 1902-03

188. D/O letter No.2487 from the Political Agent Pulkhian States and Bahawalpur to the Chief Secretary Bahawalpur State, dated 2 July 1904.

93
Lal Kothi-Nabha



to prepare the designs of these new projects in the state.[189] It is not entirely clear whether Bhai Ram Singh actually designed any of the palaces which comprise the group of palaces in the fortified Bahawalgarh palace complex. The Mubarak Mahal (Durbar Mahal) constructed in 1904 does not appear to be the work of Bhai Ram Singh, neither does the Club House. Both designs are awkward, with none of the finesse of form, proportion and detail which was the mark of Bhai Ram Singh's designs.

Other evidence from this period also shows the great demand for Bhai Ram Singh. In 1901, the Jammu & Kashmir State wanted either Sir Samuel Swinton Jacob or Bhai Ram Singh to design a College at Srinagar.[190] The Raja of Chamba was not far behind; he commissioned Ram Singh, in 1911, to prepare the design for his residence at Lahore. The Nabha State commissioned the Lal Kothi at Nabha, (circa 1902-03) and the New Zenana Palace for Tikka Sahib of Nabha; whereas at Patiala, in addition to the interior works of the Durbar Hall, Bhai Ram Singh was commissioned to design the Kothi for Sardar Bhagwan Singh, Judge, Chief Court Patiala, and at Alwar the country residence of Altarano Alwar. The Maharaja

189. Letter from Muhammad Din, Chief Secretary, Bahawalpur State, dated Srinagar 12 July 1904.

190. Letter from the Foreign Office of the J&K State, dated 1 July 1901.

of Mysore in addition to the ceiling of the Durbar Hall (1882), later commissioned Ram Singh for the design of the canopy for the statue of the late ruler Chamarajindra Wadoiar.

The design for the Chamba House, Lahore, was an important assignment and an addition to the repertoire of works done for the Princely States. The Punjab states all had residences in the seat of Government at Lahore. Thus, the Rajas of Kapurthala, Nabha, Patiala, Faridkot, Jind, Khairpur, Poonch as well as the Nawab of Bahawalpur had houses on large tracts of land in the city. The Chamba, Patiala and Khairpur houses were located in the vicinity of the Governor's House. The Patiala Raja was the senior-most in protocol and his house was appropriately located on the Mall, close to the Governor's House and opposite to what was then the Punjab Club (now the Administrative Staff College), on the site which now has the Pearl Continental Hotel. The Raja of Chamba's[191] house was behind the Patiala House and contiguous to the Government Officers Residences (GOR), an area exclusively meant for the colonial officers, while the Nawab of Khairpur's house was inside the GOR.

The Chamba estate was about 75 kanals of land which was originally an orchard in the ownership of a Mr. Imam din Qazi of Mozang, and was purchased in about 1910 by Raja Bhuri Singh.[192] When Ram Singh was commissioned to design the house he submitted the layout and the proposed building plans sometime after December 1911, when he was already an MVO, as the signatures on the plans show. The design was sanctioned on 10 January 1914, after the retirement of Bhai Ram Singh as Principal Mayo School of Arts.

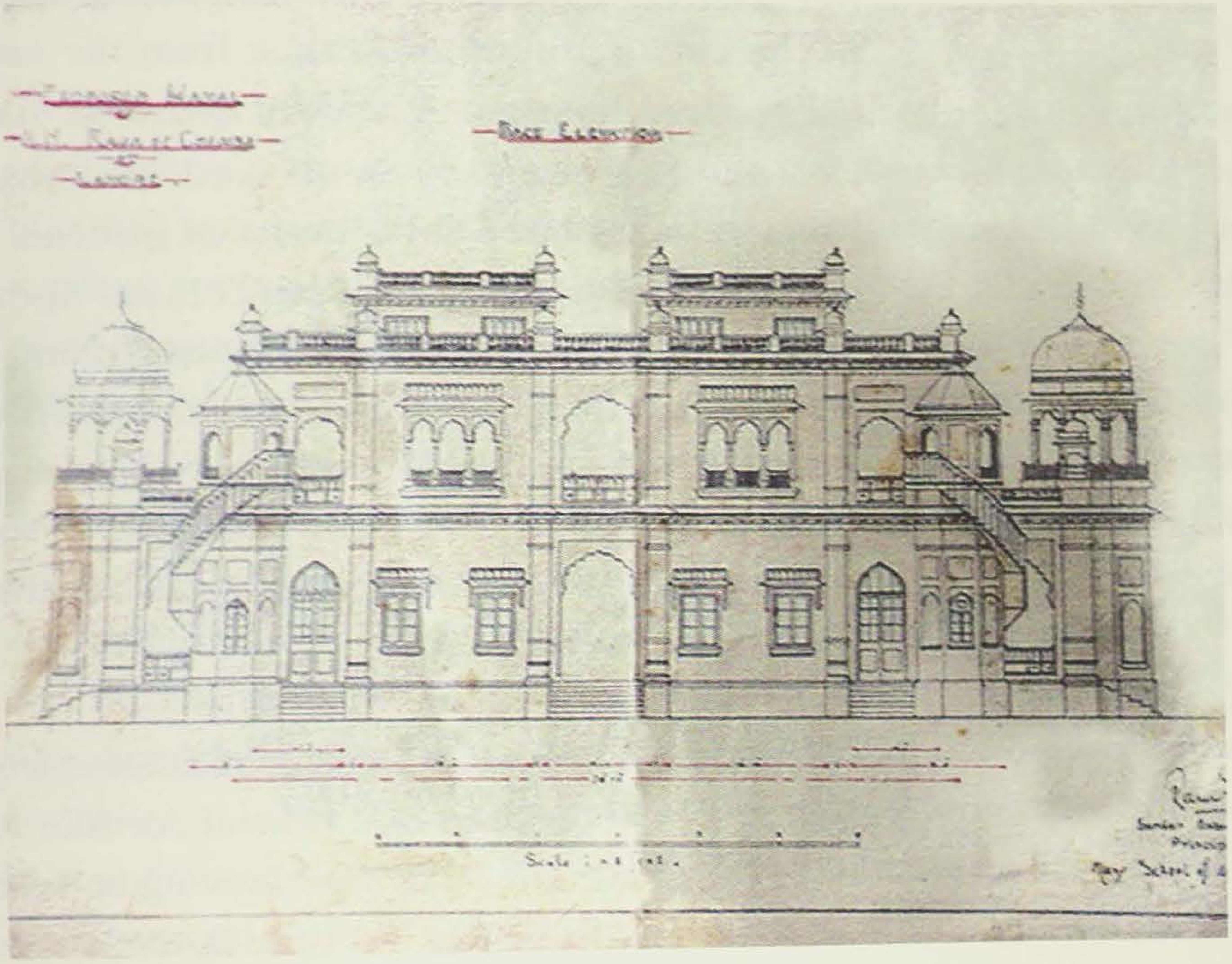
The site layout plan is a typical colonial configuration, with two

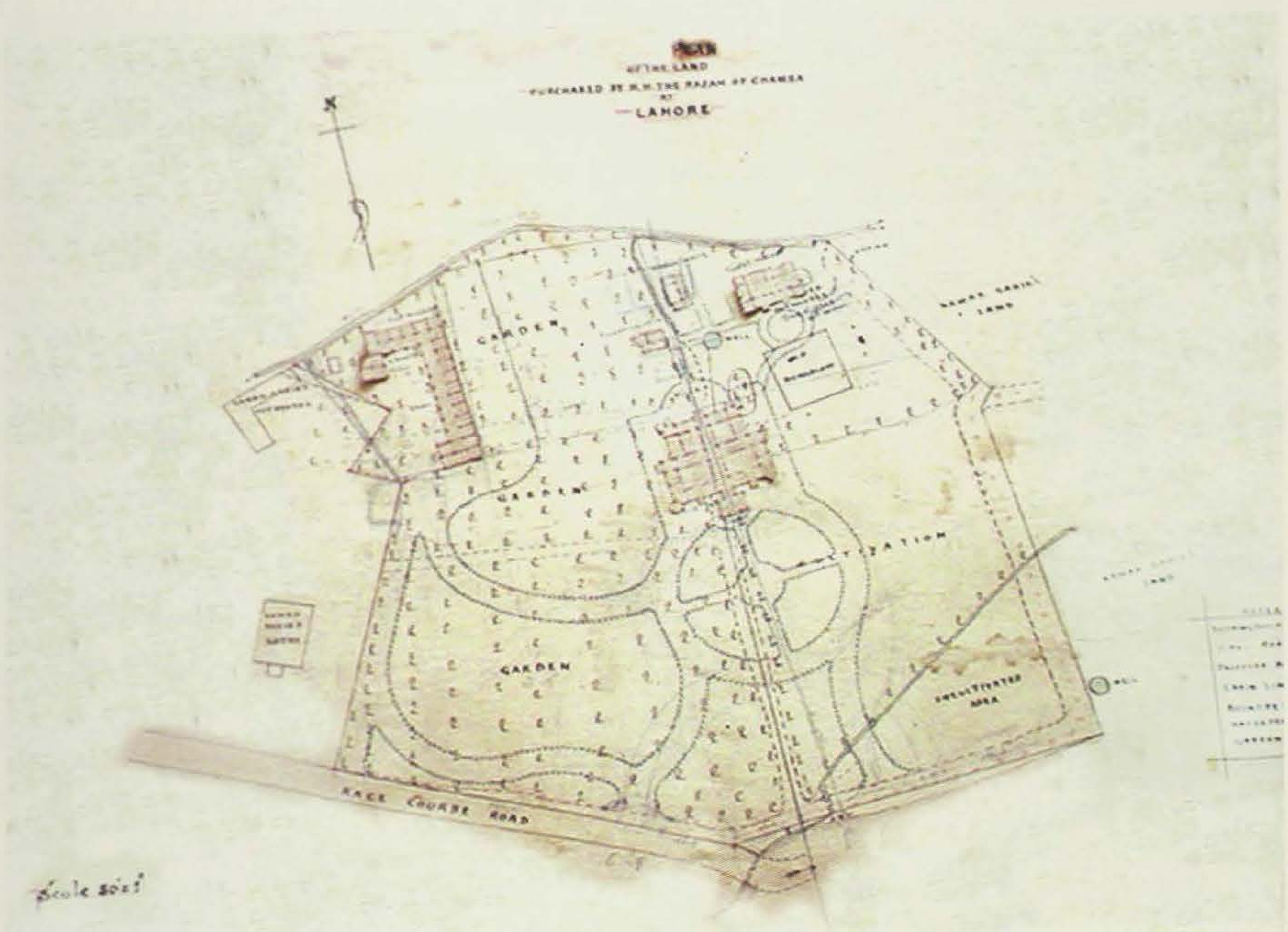
191. Drawings with Pak PWD, according to the info from Rashid Toosi's report.

192. Raja Bhuri Singh ruled Chamba from 1904 to 1919. He may have asked Bhai Ram Singh to do the additions to the Rang Mahal palace at Chamba which was carried out during this period in British and Saracenic styles

94

Chamba House, Lahore. One of the few surviving drawings with Ram Singh's family at Amritsar.





95

Chamba House, Lahore. Layout Plan.

gates, an entry and an exit and the main house located in the center of the estate and at a distance from the main access road, the Racecourse Road; with servant quarters, stables and outhouses located on the periphery on the north western corner, and separated from the main house by a buffer of gardens. A house was placed behind the Raja's house for his Political Agent. The road network was designed as a soft circular arrangement, meandering through the estate, linking the various structures. From the entry, the road branched into two, one leading to the *Mahal* and the Political Agent's residence beyond; while the other led to the service areas and stables. The eastern side of the estate had cultivated land, presumably the original orchards.

The plan of the mahal was delineated as a typical colonial house with a portico leading to a central corridor with rooms on either side, the front two being the drawing and dinning room with the bedroom positioned at the rear. It was a double-storey structure with some of the bedrooms at the upper level, with attached octagonal bathrooms. Staircases from the exterior led to the upper level bathrooms for removal of the night soil, since at the time the flush system was yet to be introduced in Lahore. Kitchens for the two houses were placed as separate structures at the rear of the Raja's *Mahal*. The plan was articulated as a four-layered structure with accentuated octagonal end rooms at each corner with *chatris* at the top. Ram Singh harnessed his various design features, such as highly textured parapets, cornices, plinth and sills using ornamental and molded bricks as well as cupolas, *chatris* and *jarokas* at strategic locations, to create a rich lyrical composition in fair-faced brickwork. Other than the Chamba House, Bhai Ram Singh designed some other houses in Lahore, this included the bungalow for R.B. Mela Ram & Sons; a house for Lala Lal Chand, and a bungalow No. 2 on the Upper Mall, Lahore.

Religious Buildings

Religious buildings designed by Bhai Ram Singh are not that easily identifiable, although, it can be safely assumed that with the standing and reputation that he had acquired as an architect, his services for his religion must often have been called for. The lack of information has a lot to do with the religious concept of " *Sewa*", selfless labor, of the Sikhs. It is known that he designed the Gurdwaras at the Aitchison College and the Khalsa College as part of the College complexes. Ram Singh also designed a Gurdwara at Amritsar, on the periphery of the old city. The Gurdawara was to commemorate the martyrdom at Saragarhi in 1898, of the 36th Sikh Regiment, (now the 4th Sikh Regiment) of the Bengal Infantry. The gurdawara was to be a memorial for the twenty-one men who had fallen in battle on 12 September 1897 while fighting the Pathans, at a signaling relay post called Saragarhi, between the forts of Lockhart and Gulistan on the Sumana ridge of the Hindukush and



96

Khalsa College, Amritsar. Gurdwara.



97

Gurdawara Amritsar. Saragarhi Memorial. Designed 1898.

Sulaiman ranges in the NWFP. The battle was later recognized by UNESCO as one of the eight stories of collective bravery. The Government of India decided to honor the martyrs with a suitable memorial at Amritsar; in addition all twenty-one were awarded the Indian Order of Merit Class 1 (posthumously), which at the time was the highest gallantry award given to Indian troops; the dependents were also awarded 50 acres of land and Rs 500 each. Consequently, the Secretary to the Government Military wing wrote to the Secretary PWD informing him of the Government's decision and suggesting that Bhai Ram Singh, Vice Principal of the Mayo School of Arts, should be asked to prepare the design.[193] He also wrote that since the Government was unable to fix the cost, alternate designs should be prepared with the least expensive being Rs 10,000 and the most Rs. 20,000. On the issue of the design he suggested that it should harmonize with the surroundings. While the selection of the site was left to the Lieutenant Governor, it was 'thought that for the purpose required there will probably be no difficulty in obtaining a suitable site free.'[194] Subsequently a site was selected on the periphery of Amritsar and work on the project started in earnest. The Memorial was the Saragarhi Gurdawara, a small structure with the names of the fallen soldiers inscribed in marble at the entrance.

While Ram Singh was working on the design of the Amritsar Gurdwara, the Government decided to erect a memorial gurdwara to honor the martyrs of Saragarhi at Muktsar or Taran Taran and asked Ram Singh to prepare a separate design for these. This was also taken in hand; however later the Gurdawara was constructed at Ferozepur, the home of the 4th Sikh Battalion. The form of this

193. Letter No. 449-M.W. from Secretary of the Government of India, Military Wing to Secretary to the Government Punjab, Public Works Department dated 14 February 1898.

194. ibid

gurdawara was octagonal as opposed to the Amritsar one which was square; both the memorials are domed structures of similar design, with plastered interior and exterior surfaces painted white. The other known work was the marble railing around the tank of Harmandar Sahib at Amritsar, erected in 1906 'to prevent all danger to bathers from drowning'.[195]

Exhibitions, Durbars and Awards

Bhai Ram Singh was engaged in the preparation of exhibitions throughout the period of his appointment at the Mayo School. The highly successful Indo-Colonial Exhibition of 1886 held at London in which the School and Bhai Ram Singh were able to highlight their expertise through the display of the 250 foot carved screen of the Punjab Court was followed by other similar events. An exhibition was held in Glasgow in 1888 and later, another at Bombay in 1889; this was the Art Exhibition where architectural drawings submitted by Bhai Ram Singh were highly commended[196] while Munshi Sher Muhammad was awarded a prize for the best pen-drawing. The Lahore Museum, which Bhai Ram Singh had designed in the intervening years, was the venue for the Punjab Exhibition of 1893. Speaking on the occasion the Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab spoke at length about the achievements of Bhai Ram Singh, especially the successful completion of his work at Osborne House. On another occasion, the Delhi Art exhibition of 1903, held in conjunction with the Delhi Durbar, Bhai Ram Singh prepared the room and the balcony for the Punjab Exhibits; the room and balcony 'were much admired, the carving on the latter receiving a gold medal, while the whole exhibit sold for Rs10,000'[197] In addition Ram Singh exhibited a shisham wood sideboard for which he was given a silver medal and which sold for Rs 500.

The Paris Universal Exhibition of 1900 was a great international

195. Letter from Deputy Commissioner Amritsar to Bhai Ram Singh, Vice Principal Mayo School of Art dated Amritsar 24 June 1906.

196. Report on Public Instruction, Kipling 1888-89.

197. Report on Public Instruction, 1902-03, Percy Brown, Principal pp 22-23

event where the competing powers, Britain and France, vied to outdo each other in the display of their technical development and the product of their colonies. It was a huge affair, bordering on the chaotic, in its organization. A number of committees were formed for each section of the British Empire. The Indian and Ceylon Committee was chaired by Lord George Hamilton M.P., and included Sir George C.M. Birdwood, Purdon Clarke and John Lockwood Kipling, among others, as its members. The responsibility for the extensive preparations and arrangements in India and for the decoration and general layout of the Imperial Court was given to B. Ribbentrop, the Inspector General of Forests to the Government of India. The Mayo School of Arts was also asked whether they would be 'desirous of supplying for the Paris Exhibition any specimen of art work done by the students in the course of their studies.'[198] In response, the School offered to send two wooden screens, one of *shisham* wood with four leaves each 7 feet high and 2 feet wide, and the other, a smaller carved *shisham* wood screen 4 feet 9 inches high with its four leaves each 14 inches wide. The School felt that 'most likely they would find sale there'.[199] The Lieutenant Governor of the Punjab paid the transit costs and the two screens were exhibited with a price tag of Rs 400 and Rs 150 respectively. In addition, the Mayo School was asked to prepare the 'principal decorative feature' of the Imperial Court, a large showcase or trophy of carved wood 'so designed as to illustrate several styles of Indian wood carving, and to provide space for the exhibition, behind plate glass, of the more valuable exhibits.'[200] Through the months of May to October, 1899 both the Principal and the Vice Principal were busy completing this assignment. While Percy Brown was in Lahore taking care of the correspondence and arranging for some of the material such as the glass, not readily available in Amritsar, Bhai Ram Singh was at his Mahan Singh Gate house getting the work

198. Letter No.590 S from M.W. Fenton, Revenue & Financial Secretary to the Government of India to Principal Mayo School of Arts, Lahore, dated 25 July 1899.

199. Letter No. 419 from the Principal, Mayo School of Arts dated 28 July 1899.

200. Letter No. 494-99 from B. Ribbentrop, Inspector General of Forests Simla to the Government of India for Principal Mayo School of Arts dated 24th April 1899.

98

Principal decorative feature. The Imperial Court in Paris Universal Exhibition 1900.

Report on the Indian Section of the Paris Exhibition 1900.



IMPERIAL COURT—PUNJAB SHOW CASE.

completed by the Amritsar craftsmen engaged for the purpose. By 1 November, 1899, the showcase was ready and Bhai Ram Singh wrote to ask whether Percy Brown wanted to see it before packing.'[201] The report of the exhibition described the showcase as, 'This case is of deodar wood and is exhibited by Mr. P Brown, Principal of the Mayo School of Art, Lahore. It was designed by Bhai Ram Singh, the Vice Principal, and is beautifully made and put together.'[202] The Maharaja of Kashmir provided the exhibits in it, which included 'silver and copper and enameled ware, cloths, and beautifully lacquered plates and other articles'.[203] The showcase was price-

201. Letter from Bhai Ram Singh to Percy Brown, Principal Mayo School of Arts, dated Mahan Singh Gate 31-10-1899.

202. Report on the Indian Section of the Paris Exhibition 1900 Page 28

203. ibid

tagged at Rs 2000, while the cost in preparing it had been Rs 1182'.[204] The Showcase was awarded a Silver Medal Class 6'[205] but was unable to find a buyer and was later 'gifted by the Secretary of State for India to the Royal Gardens Kew',[206] 'no reasonable offer having been received.'[207] 'The showcase was subsequently installed in the Timber Museum at Kew'.[208]

Three imperial durbars of dazzling pomp and pageantry were held by the British to show a direct link between themselves and the Mughals. The first was to mark the proclamation of Queen Victoria as Empress of India in 1877. The second was Edward VIII's Coronation Durbar of 1903, presided over by Lord Curzon, the Viceroy; while the third held in 1911 was the Coronation Durbar to mark the ascension of George V to the throne, which was attended by George V and Mary themselves. While the Mayo School had made a minor contribution in the first Durbar, for the following two, the School and Bhai Ram Singh were kept busy with work assigned to the School as well as Ram Singh himself. The 1903 Durbar held in Delhi, on the site of the imperial assemblage of 1877, was opened on 29 December 1902, with the main event held on 1 January 1903. Bhai Ram Singh's services had been placed at the disposal of the Executive Committee of the Coronation Durbar at Delhi from 10 July 1902, to its completion and beyond, thus he was there till 19th January 1903 following which he spent a further one month till 17 February 1903, in Nabha. At the Durbar of 1903 he was responsible for fiber plaster decorations as well as for some exhibits for the Delhi Art Exhibition held on the occasion.

For the Coronation Durbar, which was held on 12 December 1911, at Delhi, a vast tent city was erected on a plain close to what would soon be the imperial capital. At the Durbar, the moving of the capital of British India from Calcutta to Delhi was announced and Edward Lutyens was commissioned the task of

204. Note of Bhai Ram Singh to Principal Mayo School of Arts dated 1 March 1900.
205. Report on the Indian Section of the Paris Exhibition 1900 p 123
206. Letter from India and Ceylon Committee of Paris Exhibition to Percy Brown, Principal, Mayo School of Arts, dated Feb. 10th 1901.
207. Letter No. 617 from H. C. Hill Inspector General of Forests to the Govt. of India dated 20th June 1901 to Principal MSA
208. Report on the Indian Section of the Paris Exhibition 1900 p 44

architectural design. Ram Singh was assigned the design of the Royal Dais at the Durbar. This was an elaborate structure, which was constructed for George V and Mary who were personally attending the ceremony. While the Amphitheater was designed by Swinton Jacobs, Ram Singh's services were especially asked for in this case by the Lt. Governor of Lucknow, requesting the Lt. Governor Punjab for 'canopy *shamiana* and decoration of *pandal* for durbar'.[209]

Ram Singh was sent on deputation as per instructions of the Lt. Governor conveyed via letter dated 11 March 1911, to the Director of Public Instruction, Col. Maclagan, although he appears to have been stationed at Lahore. Later Col. Maclagan asked him to make Delhi his headquarters from 1 October till the time of the Durbar to supervise the work for which he was in charge. When the design of the Royal Dais was completed it was sent to Ms. Jessop & Co, Ltd, Engineers, 93 Clive St., Calcutta, for construction. Some problems arose because of the size and placement of the Dais in relationship to the Amphitheater. Correspondence between Swinton Jacobs and Ram Singh suggests that some modifications of columns was made to accommodate Ram Singh's design. Ram Singh also designed the two golden carpets for the Royal Dais.[210]

Col. Maclagan appears to have played an important role in getting further work for Ram Singh. The fibrous plasterwork for the ceiling was assigned to Ram Singh and constructed by Ms. Makhan Singh Sohal and Brothers, Contractors, Amritsar, the firm established by his son. He seems to have given some cause for concern to Col. Maclagan because of the slow progress. In September Col. Maclagan sent urgent letters to Bhai Ram Singh asking him to get his son to show some progress on the work.[211] On 9 September he wrote 'I

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209. Telegram from Lt. Governor Lucknow to Lt. Governor Lahore, dated 10 March 1911

210. Letter from Superintending Engineer 2nd Circle, Delhi, to Bhai Ram Singh, Principal, Mayo School of Arts dated 11th August 1911.

211. Letter from Office of the Superintendent dated 3 September 1911

recommended you to the Committee for the work and shall be blamed if it does not progress to their satisfaction'.[212] However, the work was completed in time and the firm did get a certificate for their work.[213]

Following the Durbar of 1903, Bhai Ram Singh received his first public recognition by the Government with the award in 1903 of the Kaiser-e-Hind 2nd class.[214] This was followed a few years later with the title of Sardar Sahib (1 January 1907) and Sardar Bahadar (25 June 1909) and finally on 12 December 1911, his name again figured in the honors announced on the occasion of the Durbar of 1911. He was made a Member of the Victorian Order (MVO) and awarded a medal for his work for the Delhi Durbar of 1911.

Ram Singh as Principal Mayo School of Arts

At the School of Arts, Ram Singh made steady progress, having been appointed Vice-Principal on 1 December 1896, on a salary of Rs. 150 per month, and eventually as Principal on 24 September 1910, a position he had officiated against on several occasions, the last time being from 3 January 1909 to 25 September 1909. On his assumption of the post of Principal his salary was fixed at the rate of, Rs 500-40-700, much below what Kipling had been paid as Principal in 1875, lower pay for native staff for the same post being a feature of the colonial system. Ram Singh had earlier, while an assistant non-gazetted teacher, raised the issue that 'My claim is that whilst the English Vice Principal is accorded a good position and ample pay (Rs 500 per month) I am only receiving Rs 60, although my duties are perhaps as varied and important. Not only do I have to teach architecture, drawing, carpentry and carving, metal working...In addition, I have to design for the school when any buildings are referred to it, to make working drawings and

212. Letter from Superintending Engineer 2 Circle, Simla to Bhai Ram Singh, Principal Mayo School of Arts dated 9 Sept.1911

213. Letter No. 923 from Maj. S DA Crookshanks, Royal Engineer and Superintendent of Durbar Works, Delhi to Bhai Ram Singh, Principal MSA, dated 3 April 1912.

214. KAISER-I-HIND medal awarded for public service in India: The medal is an oval shaped badge or decoration in gold, for the first class and in silver for the second class, with the royal cypher on one side and on the reverse the words " Kaiser-i-Hind for public service in India" It is suspended on the left breast by a dark blue ribbon. (Indian Year Book 1915).

superintend the work'; he goes on to write, ' I feel that the pay I am granted for the important work I perform is quite out of proportion to the money paid to the Vice-Principal...had I gone to Roorkee for three years instead of the many years lost at Lahore, I should now have a very comfortable position with good future prospects.'[215]

Bhai Ram Singh was officially first considered as Principal of the Mayo School in 1893, during the process of the Government examining whether it was feasible for art schools to be maintained any longer as State Institutions. Kipling had retired in 1893 and E.B. Havell, the Principal of the Calcutta School of Art had requested the Government of Madras to be allowed to retire. Ram Singh at the time was an Assistant teacher-non-gazetted but due to the royal commissions and the other works that he had successfully implemented was already well-known in official circles. The Governor General of India requested the Secretary of State for India, the Earl of Kimberley, for suitable replacements from Britain, Kimberley in return, in his letter dated November 9, 1893, decided that this matter should be kept pending till the basic question of whether art schools played any useful role, had been resolved.[216] The letter and its consequent discussions are worth quoting in detail as they illustrate the colonial attitude towards native art and industry.

> "I have received your Educational letter No 5, of the 25th July last, requesting me to select a gentleman in this country for the recently vacated Principalship of the Mayo School of Industrial Art, Lahore; and having at the same time received a letter of the 31st of August last from Mr. E.B. Havell, stating that he had applied to the Government of Madras to be allowed to retire on the 25th December next from his appointment as Superintendent of the Madras School of Arts, I have resolved to fill up neither of the appointments pending a reference to your Excellency of the question ... whether Schools of Art in India should any longer continue to be supported as State Institutions? ... there is a

215. Draft letter from Bhai Ram Singh to Sir George Birdwood, dated Lahore 25 October 1893.

216. Letter from the Secretary of State for India, the Earl of Kimberley to the Governor General in Council for India, dated 9 November 1893, para 6

> general consent that they serve no really useful purpose while the considerable expenditure on them from the Imperial revenue is ... unjustifiable...There would be little difficulty in obtaining ... persons duly qualified for the superintendence of elementary technical schools ... native masters of the stamp of Mr. Ram Singh of Lahore who designed and executed ... the public apartment of Her Majesty's palace at Osborne."[217]

Subsequently, an Art Conference was held in Lahore from 1 January to 4 January 1894, to consider the questions raised by the Secretary of State. Surgeon Lieutenant Colonel Thomas H. Hendley was the President with F.H. Andrews the officiating Principal of the Mayo School as secretary; no native artist or art-teacher was invited to give an opinion and of the fourteen members there were only three native gentlemen representing the states of Gwalior, Jodhpur and Kashmir.

The report of the conference stated that 'the members ... in the first place, respectfully record that their personal experience and the overwhelming evidence placed before them at their meetings do not allow them to admit that 'there is a general consent that the Schools of Art serve no really useful purpose'...but that they have the most beneficial effect of protecting the arts and artisans of the country from the extraneous and dangerous influences to which the conditions of modern life and facilities of interchange of ideas have subjected them.'[218] The report went on to negate almost all the opinions of the Secretary of State, and regarding his high opinion of Ram Singh it opined as follows: 'In reference to paragraph 3 of the Despatch of Her Majesty's Secretary of State for India, the following members of the Conference viz. Dr. Watt and Ms. Griffiths and Nicholl, having seen at Amritsar the original home of Mr. Ram Singh of Lahore, desire to place on record the fact that he owed his art education entirely to the School of Art at Lahore, and that

217. ibid, para 3

218. Art Conference Held at Delhi Report p 3 in *Selections from the Government of India Home Dept. No CCCLVI Serial No. 23; Papers relating to Maintenance of Schools of Art in India as State Institutions from 1893-96*

without the training he received there, he would have, in all probability, remained a village carpenter.'[219]

Eventually, the idea that art schools did serve a useful purpose seems to have carried the day; F.H. Andrews, the officiating Principal was appointed Principal and both Ram Singh and Sher Muhammad, the Assistant teachers, were given gazetted appointments: Ram Singh as Drawing and Carpentry Master, on 15 October 1894. F.H. Andrews for personal reasons left for England on furlough for one year and one month and twenty-nine days from 12th March 1898 and Bhai Ram Singh was given officiating charge of the position of Principal while Andrews was on leave.[220]

Andrews did not return, and resigned from the post of Principal. While the relationship between the two seems to be pretty cordial with Andrews requesting Ram Singh to send his baggage to his house in Woodberry, and Ram Singh helping with the careful packing of his belongings, Ram Singh felt that it was an opportunity for him to be considered as Principal of the Mayo School now that Andrews had resigned. He had already been serving as officiating Principal for well over a year and had successfully carried out the mission of the School. Ram Singh rightly felt that there was no reason for him not to be confirmed against this position and he appealed to the then Lieutenant Governor, Punjab, Sir William Mackworth Young for the same, through Dr. J. Sime the Director of Public Instruction Punjab.

In his letter Ram Singh evoked the conscience of the Lieutenant Governor, 'It is on the whole, my Righteous Governor, a question of colour and not of innate worth that makes them think otherwise than that I may claim to throw myself on your benevolent attention to be confirmed in my present post'[221] and he further reminded the Lieutenant Governor that even before he joined the Mayo School

219. Memorandum No 7 p 17 Art Conference Held at Delhi Report in *Selections from the Government of India Home Dept. No CCCLVI Serial No. 23; Papers relating to Maintenance of Schools of Art in India as State Institutions from 1893-96*

220. Gazette notification No. 24 & 25, dated 2 March 1898.

221. Draft letter dated 8 December 1899; from Bhai Ram Singh to the Lt. Governor Punjab through Dr. J. Sime, Director of Public Instruction, Punjab.

he had repaired and polished Lady Young's piano to the approval of the Lieutenant Governor who was then Deputy Commissioner at Amritsar. He listed his own skills and proficiency in the arts, being taught at the school, such as free-hand drawing, perspective drawing, practical geometry, plane and solid; modeling and plaster molding, carving in wood and ivory; designing furniture and cabinet-making, metal and repousse work, model making; drawing with pen and ink; Indian architecture as in ancient times and in general; as well as the skills he had acquired in England on the Osborne House Project, that of modeling and fibrous canvas plaster, sulfur molding and jelly molding and so on. He also drew the attention of the Governor to the fact that he had tried to enhance the status of the Institute in all formal and material aspects. In the end he wrote '...if my Master Kipling condescended now to be the Head or the Principal of the Mayo School of Art, at Lahore would the post be denied to him? No! If Ram Singh, who takes after him in all the important departure of a School of Art, can, by his own choice, be considered worthy of his master's chair, should he be sent to dogs merely because he is a little deep complexioned?'[222] The letter ended with 'Leaving the rest at the benevolent disposal of "The Truth"'.[223] This was not to be, for Percy Brown was appointed as Principal on 9 May 1899 and Ram Singh was reverted to his substantive position of Vice Principal.

Ram Singh was finally appointed Principal on 25th September 1910 and retired from service in October 1913, after being at the Mayo School for thirty-eight years. On his retirement, his Vice-Principal Lionel Heath was made Principal of the School on 1 November 1910. In his first report he acknowledged Bhai Ram Singh's long association and wrote in his annual report 'The Principal, Sardar Bahadur Ram Singh M.V.O., retired from service in October 1913. He was one of the first students to join the School of Art in 1873 (*sic*), and was appointed to the staff 10 years later,

222. Ibid.
223. Ibid.

becoming Principal in 1910. Sardar Bahadur Ram Singh's talents are widely known, and his long and honorable career is one for the students to emulate'.[224]

After his retirement, Ram Singh continued his work through the firm of Bhai Ram Singh MVO and Sons, Cheel-Mandi, Mahan Singh Gate, Amritsar and remained professionally busy in projects such as the Chamba House, Lahore and the Khalsa College, Amritsar, along with other commissions. His great grandsons in Amritsar spoke of family stories saying that Bhai Ram Singh would often travel to Lahore, dressed in white, in his horse carriage, to visit the projects under construction. He had, reputedly, become a man of property with a high social standing. His grandsons pointed out, with a touch of nostalgia, the row of buildings and *havelis* in their neighborhood and spoke of property in Delhi that had once belonged to the family but are no more in their possession. All that the family now has is a small house, shared among the survivors in Amritsar, along with some drawings, letters and papers, including the exquisite large drawings on cloth of the Royal Dias 1911 Durbar, rendered in ink, with the domes delineated in golden paint; but they are in a poor condition, the ravages of time and neglect having taken their toll.

Bhai Ram Singh had five sons, Makhan Singh, Sulakhan Singh, Sunder Singh, Sukhcharan Singh, Kartar Singh and two daughters. His fourth son, Sukhcharan Singh was educated at the Mayo School of Arts and established himself as a painter in Amritsar; while another, the second, Sulakhan Singh, was trained as an engineer and went for further studies to Glasgow. Makhan Singh, the eldest worked with his father. Bhai Ram Singh died about three years after his retirement, aged 58, in the first half of the year 1916, in the house of his daughter in Delhi. He left behind a legacy which for years has gathered dust and remains unacknowledged.

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224. Report on the Progress of Education in the Punjab, 1913-1914; page 19



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Bhai Ram Singh (1911) wearing the five medals (from left Sardar Sahib, Sardar Bahadur, MVO, Kaisar-e-Hind, Delhi Durbar Medal)

As an architect and a master craftsman Ram Singh designed with equal facility a building, a piece of furniture, a *shamina* or a certificate. His impact on the architecture of the Punjab, and Lahore in particular, can be gauged as a contrast with other colonial period buildings in Lahore. The Lahore General Post Office, High Court, Municipal Hall, Assembly Hall are designed by different architects of the period. Each is a building of merit employing European motifs and vocabulary and with attempts to use "native" features. Almost all these attempts of mixing the "native" with

the "European", however, romanticize Indian architecture with the details employed with a lack of conviction. They employ features in a somewhat superficial manner, turning the native features into irrelevant decorations, a farce, or at best, as a fig leaf to cover the European styles. Ram Singh's buildings, Aitchison College, the Mayo School of Arts (presently the National College of Arts), the Lahore Museum, the Punjab University Hall, the boarding house of the Government College, the Albert Victor Hospital and other buildings in the Medical College complex, and above all the Khalsa College, Amritsar, on the other hand, show an integrity of design with a masterly handling of the details of construction, in proportion, texture and rhythm. Whether it is the mundane feature of the Albert Victor Hospital porch, the soaring tower of the Punjab University, the lofty domes of the Museum, the playful yet noble rhythm of the cupolas of the Khalsa College, or the grandeur of Aitchison College, Ram Singh imparts to his building that touch of genius that differentiates the ordinary from the truly inspired works of art. Ram Singh continually posed challenges to the brick-makers of Lahore to develop new shapes. He teased out of brickwork the carved texture of wood. His use of the rope motif, the stylized animals, the variation in levels to play with the strong sun of Lahore and the resultant chiaroscuro effects of light and shade, give his walls a life of their own. The walls change with the sun, now shining with strong light and later brooding in the setting sun; they convey messages so typically Indian in their complexity of emotions, strongly attached to nature and its vagaries. His architecture is a celebration of the coming together of cultures and despite the pronouncements of the son of his tutor on the east and the west, the twain, do meet in Ram Singh's philosophy and architecture.

Personal, Professional and Service History of Bhai Ram Singh

1-8-1858	**Date of Birth, as recorded in History of Government Servants (1904, 1908, 1913)**
1874	**Enrolled at the Lahore School of Carpentry**
1875	**Enrolled at the Mayo School of Industrial Arts**
1876	Collected paper casts of old wood carvings in Amritsar during summer vacation Prepared measured drawings of Marble inlay decoration of the Darbar Sahib, Amritsar Design of ornamental details for a drawing room desk Participated in the Simla Art Exhibition , exhibited designs and drawings, along with other Mayo School of Art's students
1877	Delhi Durbar 1877 to mark proclamation of Victoria as Empress of India, Minor contribution by Mayo School of Arts
1879	Prepared, along with other students, banners emblazoned with arms of Princes and Chiefs of India, Governors, Lieutenant-Governors, & C-in-C. Kipling's designs developed. Prepared plans and elevations of old buildings of Lahore Temporarily joined the staff of Capt. Cole, Royal Engineer ? Prepared a heavily carved showcase for the Melbourne Exhibition
1880	Participated in the Melbourne International Exhibition 1880-81, exhibited carved showcase
1881-82	Prepared the design for the Mayo School of Arts buidings under direction of the Principal, J.L. Kipling Competed in the Simla Art Exhibition, did not win a prize; exhibited drawings Prepared Measured drawings of Old Palace at Amber, Jaipur of architecture and decorative details; along with MSA students Prepared Measured Drawings for India Museum, South Kensington, of two old houses in Lahore and other details, along with other students

	Designed Interior of the Durbar hall (Indian Room) at Osborne House, England
	Designed the Government College, Lahore Boarding House (Now Iqbal Hostel)
	Designed Interior of Drawing Room at Government House, Lahore
	Designed the Khalsa College and Boarding Houses, Amritsar
1894	**Appointed gazetted officer (Drawing & Carpentry Master) on15-10-94**
	Appointed as Vice Principal Mayo School of Arts, Lahore (officiating) 15-10-94
	Designed House for Malik Umar Hayat Khan at Kalra Estate 1893-94
	Designed Interior and ambulatory in wood, New Mission Church, Peshawar
	Prepared Furniture (screens, tables) for the Government House, Lahore
1896-97	**Vice-principal MSA(substantive appointment) at Rs 150 per month on 1-12-96**
	Designed Gurdwara and Dharamsala, Khalsa College, Amritsar. (1896)
	Designed Hospital and Gymnasium, Khalsa College, Amritsar
1898	**Officiating Principal Mayo School of Arts and Curator Central Museum, Lahore from 12 March 1898 to 22 April1899**
	Designed the Saragahri Gurdwara, Amritsar
	Designed the Saragahri Gurdwara, Taran Taran
1899	Designed Government College Boarding House (Now Iqbal Hostel)-extension of north wing lower floor
	Prepared Punjab Show Case for the Paris Universal Exhibition of 1900
	Designed the House of Nawab of Bahawalpur, Aitchison College, Lahore ?
1900-01	Prepared Pulpit for the Vice-Regal Lodge, Simla (now the Indian Institute of Advanced Studies) 1900
	Designed College and other buildings Srinagar, Jammu & Kashmir State 1901
	Supervised preparation of Facsimiles of historic buildings in and near Lahore for Calcutta Museum – prepared at MSA
	Designed House for Head Master, Aitchison College Lahore (1900-1901)?
	Designed House for Vice Principal, Aitchison College Lahore (1901-1902)?
1902-3	**Services attatched to the Delhi Arts Exhibition (10-4-02)**
	Prepared balcony and room used for exhibits at the Delhi Arts Exhibition; Shisham side board by Ram Singh exhibited, sold for Rs 500 and awarded silver medal.
	Services attatched to the Executive Committee Coronation Durbar Delhi (10-7-02 to 19-1-03) & on completion lent to Nabha State (20-1-03 to 17-02-03)

	Designed Interior of the Durbar hall (Indian Room) at Osborne House, England Designed the Government College, Lahore Boarding House (Now Iqbal Hostel) Designed Interior of Drawing Room at Government House, Lahore Designed the Khalsa College and Boarding Houses, Amritsar
1894	**Appointed gazetted officer (Drawing & Carpentry Master) on15-10-94** **Appointed as Vice Principal Mayo School of Arts, Lahore (officiating) 15-10-94** Designed House for Malik Umar Hayat Khan at Kalra Estate 1893-94 Designed Interior and ambulatory in wood, New Mission Church, Peshawar Prepared Furniture (screens, tables) for the Government House, Lahore
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Coronation Durbar, Delhi (1903); responsible for fiber plaster decorations
Design/ Supervision of Lal Kothi, Nabha State
Designed interior of Drawing Room at Barnes Court, Simla; Summer Residence of the Governor, Punjab (1903)
Designed interior of Drawing Room at Snowdone, Simla (1903)
Designed interior of Durbar Hall, Nabha State. (1903)
Designed interior of Durbar Hall, Patiala State. (1903)
Awarded Kaisar-i-Hind Medal of the 2nd Class on 1 Jan, 1903
Officiating Principal Mayo School of Arts from 6-04-02 to 30-04-1902
1904 **Officiating Principal Mayo School of Arts from 9-06-04 to 1-08-04**
Designed Punjab National Bank, Anarkali Bazaar Lahore.
Designed Government College Boarding House (Now Iqbal Hostel)-extension of north wing upper floor
Officiating Principal , Mayo School of Arts from 4-04-05 to 12-01-06
Designed Punjab University Hall, Lahore (1905)
Designed interior of Durbar Hall, Kupartala State. (1905)
Designed Rattingan Memorial Dispensary, Khalsa College, Amritsar.
Officiating Principal , Mayo School of Arts from 25-02-06 to 4-11-06
Designed railing around tank of Golden Temple, Amritsar
Designed Agriculture College and Boarding House, Lyallpur (1906)
Officiating Principal , Mayo School of Arts 11-05-07 to 18-12-07
Awarded title of Sardar Sahib 1-1-1907
Designed Dhramsala and Temple, Aitchison College, Lahore
Officiating Principal, Mayo School of Arts, from 3-01-09 to 25-09-10 & Curator, Lahore Museum from 20-04-09 to 25-09-10
Designed interior of Durbar Hall, Maler Kotla State
Awarded title of of Sardar Bahadur 25-06-09
Appointed Principal Mayo School of Arts (substansive appointemnt) in 500-40-700 grade
Designed the Punjab University Library at Lahore. (1910)
Designed the Queen Mary College, Lahore. Main Building and Infirmary (1910)

Made Member of the Victorian Order (MVO) - (12-12-1911)
Coronation Durbar Delhi (1911), Designed Royal Dais, two carpets and Durbar canopy

Designed Chamba House Lahore
Designed 25 houses at the Khalsa College, Amritsar
Designed Science Laborataries at Khalsa College, Amritsar
Designed Post Office, Khalsa College, Amritsar.
Designed ceiling of Green Hall, Jammu and Kashmir State.
Designed the workshops at Mayo School of Arts, Lahore.
Retired from service in October 1913
Designed Islamia University Peshawar Main Building?
Designed Canopy for the statue of the late ruler Chamarajindra Wadoiar, Mysore
Died first half of 1916

Other Works	Bungalow for R.B.Mela Ram & Sons, Lahore
	House for Lala Lal Chand, Lahore
	Bungalow No. 2 on Upper Mall, Lahore
	House for Sardar Bhagwan Singh, Judge Chief Court, Patiala State
	New Zenanna Palace for Tikka Sahib of Nabba
	Country Residence of Altarano Alwar
Educational Buildings	Standard Plan for Government High School Buildings, Punjab for the PWD
	School at Amritsar
Other Buildings	District Board Hall, Allahabad
	The Munsiff's Court, Amritsar; for Rai Bahadur Ganga Ram, Executive Engineer.
	A Memorial at Peshawar for Rai Bahadur Ganga Ram, Executive Engineer.
	A Show Room at Amritsar
	Internal plaster decorations at Sandamen Hall, Quetta
	Design and decorative work in plaster for the new Railway Theatre, Lahore
Certificates	Design of Ceritifcate for the Society for the Encouragement of Indian Art in London for Sir George Birdwood, highly commended
	Design of Ceritificate for Department of Public Instruction, Punjab, (photo lithographed by BRS)
Furniture	Screen in the collection of National College of Arts, Lahore
	Chini Khana in the collection of National College of Arts, Lahore
	Canon Stalls for the Lefroy Memorial in Lahore Cantonment's Church.

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Glossary of Terms

Meaning

Englishman, or any non-Indian
Petty official
Garden
Water carrier
Sitting area for male visitors in the house
Bara : Lit. twelve; Dari: Lit. opening; An open pavilion with 3 openings on each side
Vendors who carried around wares in boxes ... a derogatory term used by the superior British officers for the British traders
Extended family, almost a clan
A decorative small balcony above the doorway
Cantonment
Literally Umbrella, small decorative umbrella shaped pavilion or turret usually placed on the parapet or roof of buildings for decorative or symbolic purposes
Wooden carved decorative shelves
Laborers
An inn run by a religious body for pilgrims or travelers
Dhobi : Washer man, Ghat : tank and platform for washing clothes
Land between two rivers
Court, a public audience/ reception room
Elephant headed Hindu god of good fortune and wisdom, son of Shiva and Parvati

ghee	Purified butter used in cooking in India
hakim	Indian doctor
haveli	A large residence
jagirdar	A person with a large land holding
jalliwork	Jali : Lit. net; Perforated screen of stone, wood or brick
jangli	Resident of a jungle - savage
kashi	Mosaic work
lakha	Fantail, a variety of pigeon
madrissah	A native place of learning
mahal	palace
mai-baap	Literally parents ... used for Rulers
mandi	market
masjid	Mosque
mauza	village
mem-sahibs	British women
mistries	Craftsmen
mohallahs	Neighborhoods
munabatkari	Stucco tracery
munsiff	A judge
palkis	Palanquins, covered litter for one carried by four or six men
pandal	Dais, raised platform for honored guests
pinjrawork	Lattice work in wood
purani	Old
purdah	Lit a curtain or veil, usually signifies the concealment of women
rehriwallah	Cart vendor
sahib	Gentleman, a respectful way of addressing a man.
sarai or serai	A place to stay for travelers
shamiana	Marquee
Wala ghalib illal lah	Allah is predominant over everything; Verse 21, Surah Yusuf; Holy Quran
zenana	Area of a residence reserved for the women

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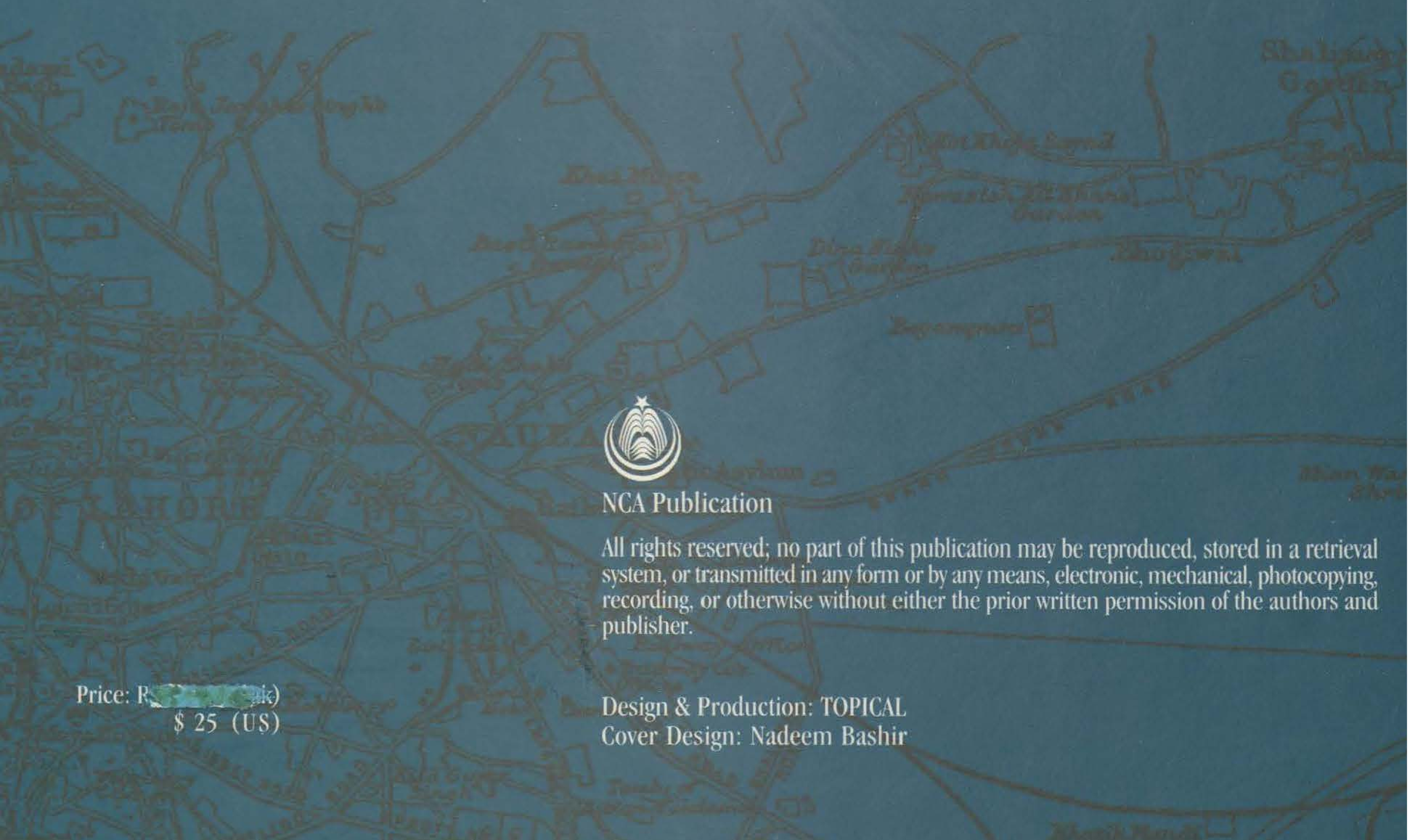
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The Raj, Lahore & Bhai Ram Singh

Ram Singh, born, in 1858, to the Ramgarhia Sohal family in a village called Rasulpur, near Batala, District Gurdaspur, India, was an accomplished carpenter by the age of sixteen. He first appears in records as one of the students of the Lahore School of Carpentry established in January 1874. John Lockwood Kipling arrived in Lahore, in 1875, to start the Mayo School of Industrial Art and students of the Carpentry School were enrolled as its first class. With a remarkable clarity of vision, Kipling sought to integrate European theory with a thorough study of the extant Indian heritage of art and architecture. Ram Singh, as Kipling's star pupil, never sought to abandon his traditions nor did he turn away from contemporary thoughts on architectural practice. He did not pursue one or the other, and, instead, integrated the two in a creative and magnificent manner.

Ram Singh's buildings have integrity of design, with a masterly handling of the details of construction, in proportion, texture and rhythm. Whether it is the mundane feature of the Albert Victor Hospital porch, or the soaring tower of the Punjab University, the lofty domes of the Museum, the playful yet noble rhythm of the cupolas of the Khalsa College, or the grandeur of Aitchison College, Ram Singh imparts to his building that touch of genius which differentiates the ordinary from the truly inspired works of art. Ram Singh continually posed challenges to the brick-makers of Lahore to develop new shapes. He teased out of brickwork the carved texture of wood. His use of the rope motif, the stylized animals, the variation in levels to play with the strong sun of Lahore and the resultant chiaroscuro effects of light and shade, give his walls a life of their own. The walls change with the sun, now shining with strong light and later brooding in the setting sun, they convey messages so typically Indian in their complexity of emotions strongly attached to nature and its vagaries. His architecture is a celebration of the coming together of cultures and despite the pronouncements of the son of his tutor, the east and the west, the twain, do meet in Ram Singh's philosophy and architecture.



NCA Publication

Price: R[illegible]k)
$ 25 (US)

Design & Production: TOPICAL
Cover Design: Nadeem Bashir